Lord Lothian Asks for Loans *An Editorial Reply*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

December 10, 1940

Are Strikes Treason?

An Editorial with a Letter from Senator Nye

WOMEN ARE HUMAN BEINGS *Ruth McKenney*

CRACKING THE FORD DOMAIN *S. W. Gerson*

MANIFEST DESTINY: 1940 *James S. Allen*

Corliss Lamont reviews the Dean of Canterbury's new book

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Between Ourselves

NEXT WEEK IN NEW MASSES

Joseph North on Mexico... R. Palme Dutt on Britain and the United States

LAST Sunday General Avila Camacho took the tricolor sash—the symbol of the Mexican presidency—from the hands of Lazaro Cardenas. A new chief of state came to Mexico as the Vice-President-elect of the United States looked on, and as the echo of bullets fired by the Almazanistas on the eve of the inauguration died away.

Joseph North was there in the chamber of deputies, reporting this historic occasion for the readers of *New Masses*. He will bring you, in next week's issue, more than an eye-witness account of events south of the border, more than the surface scene. This first of a series of articles will provide an authoritative commentary on the current situation, a picture of where Mexican-American relations are going, that you will not get anywhere else.

We are happy to announce that next week's issue will also contain an article by R. Palme Dutt, the brilliant British Marxist, on the relations between British and American imperialism in the new stage of the war. Mr. Dutt's profound analysis, written in London while the bombs were falling, brings to these shores a reflection of the opinions of the British people, their problems, their future.

The articles by Joseph North and R. Palme Dutt beginning next week will be considered in weeks to come as outstanding contributions toward a fuller understanding of international affairs. *Don't miss them.*

THERE is room for happiness and laughter today. And NM is happy to preside over the gayest merrymaking event of the season—the traditional NEW MASSES Ball at Webster Hall Saturday night, December 7. A revue entitled "Civilization as They Throw It!" will start the frolic of the friendliest folk in America, the friends of NM. The program will be devoted to a musical satire of the weak-kneed and woozy liberals, in which talented writers, musicians, and actors will join in spoofery. After the show, it's dancing until dawn to the strains of Frankie Newton's swing ensemble.

Many familiar players from the professional stage and camp circuit will be in the cast of the revue. "Civilization as They Throw It" lists numbers as follows: "We're the Independent Thinkers," "Appease with a Strip Tease," "Stop Knittin' for Britain and Purlin' for Berlin," "The Mooch of Time," "Jingo Jitters," and "Mr. Biggie Has a Pain."

N. B.—Tickets bought in advance cost only $1; at the door the price will be $1.50. Your organization may purchase a private box for $20. Reservations may be made at NM's office, 461 Fourth Avenue, Caledonia 5-3076; at the Workers Book Shop, 50 E. 13th Street, or at Bookfair, 133 W. 44th Street.

Who's Who

SIMON GERSON has completed his tour for *NM*. His article on Detroit concluded his series. . . . James Allen is the author of *The Negro Question in the United States* and *Reconstruction: The Battle for Democracy*. . . . A. J. Steiger is a journalist specializing in the Soviet Arctic. He has spent eight years in the Soviet Union. . . . Elizabeth Z. Green is an Oklahoma journalist. . . . Corliss Lamont is the author of *You Might Like Socialism*. . . . Isidor Schneider was formerly literary editor of *NM*, and is the author of *From the Kingdom of Necessity*. . . . Anna Rochester is the author of *Ruler of America* and *Why Farmers Are Poor*. . . . Lou Cooper is a musician and composer. . . . Alexander F. Bergman is a young poet whose work has often appeared in *NM*.

This Week

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXVII DECEMBER 10, 1940 NUMBER 12

New Shackles for Labor

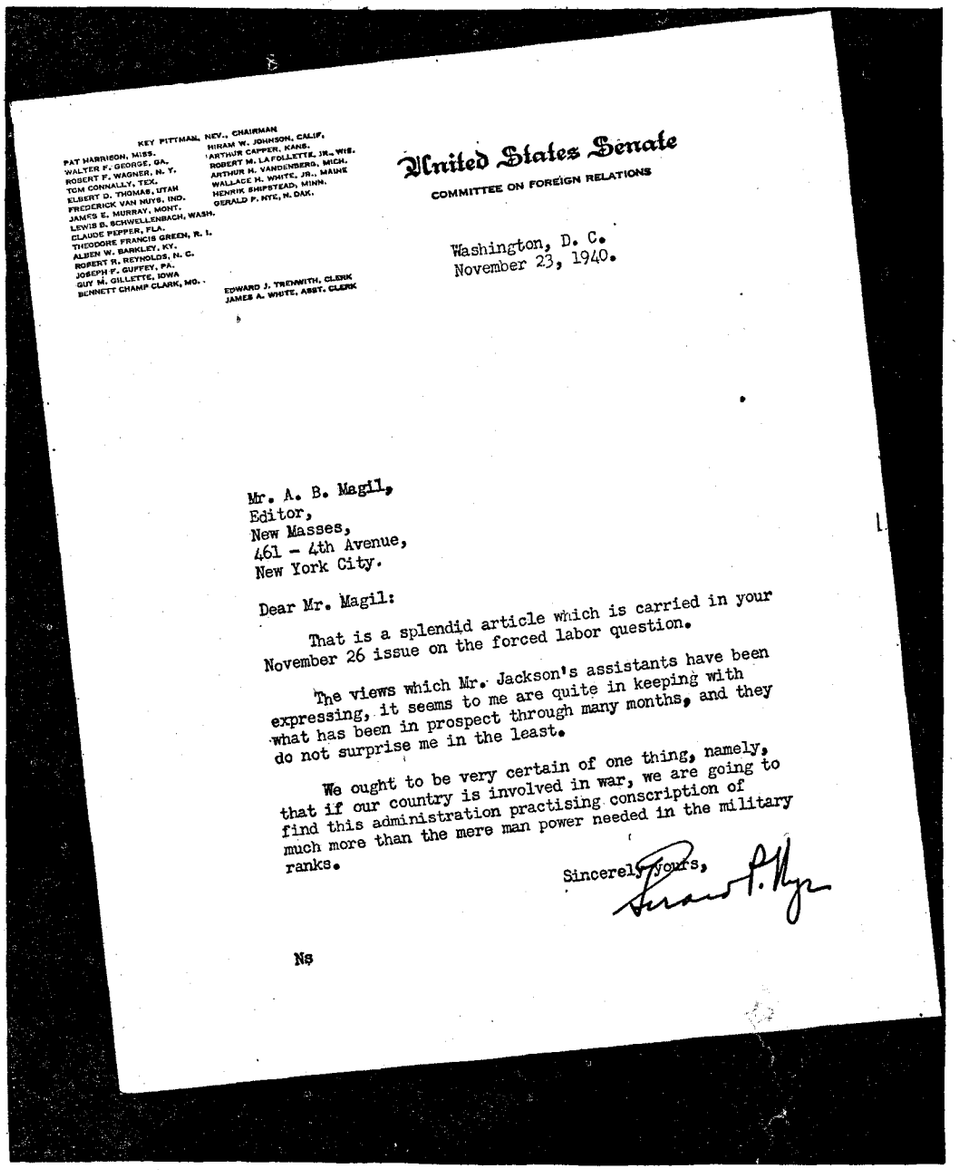
Anti-strike bills and mediation proposals menace the trade unions. Some pages from labor history. The CIO convention points the way to defend democracy. An editorial article.

A NEW mood is growing in the centers of power in America. Its origins go back into the past, but today it is emerging out of gestation, assuming palpable form. Attorney General Jackson's attack on the Vultee aircraft strike, the bills introduced in Congress to outlaw strikes in war industries, the various proposals to establish compulsory mediation or arbitration are only the latest and sharpest expressions of this mood. They are part of a larger pattern, but they are that part which brings into bold relief the meaning of the whole. As America's involvement in Europe's imperialist war moves nearer, a new phase opens in the relations between labor and the government, new tensions and new pressures come into play.

This phase was foreseen. Long ago NEW MASSES warned that the prosecution of trade unions under the anti-trust laws was not an isolated phenomenon or the product of individual caprice, but part of a broader program for the subjugation of labor within the context of the Roosevelt administration's advance to war and fascism. Long ago we warned that under the pretense of opposing amendment of the National Labor Relations Act, the administration was conspiring against its innermost spirit. And on the eve of the election we wrote: "For all its efforts to muffle the sound till after November 5, the administration is blowing retreat from the whole social program that once was the New Deal."

We do not relish the Cassandra role. We take no joy in noting how swiftly our predictions are being fulfilled. But these are times that call for clarity and sober probing into the meaning of events if we would escape catastrophe. Americans have never been content to be the victims of history. Nor will they be content to be the victims of that part of history which is now unfolding in the foreign and domestic policies of our government. That is why it is important to note that one month after the election, the pledges of peace are being transmuted into new measures of involvement in war, the promise of continued social advance is giving way to the dictum enunciated last week by President Roosevelt that all expenditures for purposes other than war production must be "cut to the bone," while the commitment to protect labor's rights is being fulfilled in efforts to intimidate and coerce the trade unions and in the appointment of a new NLRB chairman whose first act is to hold out to the workers the prospect of a ten- or twelve-hour day.

All this is only the beginning. But the ultimate goal too has appeared, its outlines dark against the horizon. Two weeks ago NEW MASSES revealed that goal as it was painted by men associated with the administration. We made known the fact that in the November issue of the *Harvard Law Review,* which appeared only a day or two after the election, three lawyers of the Department of Justice, Francis Hoague, Russell M. Brown, and Philip Marcus, published a lengthy article discussing in great detail proposals for the com-



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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Washington, D. C.
November 23, 1940.

Mr. A. B. Magil,
Editor,
New Masses,
461 - 4th Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Magil:

That is a splendid article which is carried in your November 26 issue on the forced labor question.

The views which Mr. Jackson's assistants have been expressing, it seems to me are quite in keeping with what has been in prospect through many months, and they do not surprise me in the least.

We ought to be very certain of one thing, namely, that if our country is involved in war, we are going to find this administration practising conscription of much more than the mere man power needed in the military ranks.

Sincerely yours,

Ns

TRIBUTE FROM SENATOR NYE. *The North Dakota senator's letter praising the* NEW MASSES *expose of the Roosevelt administration's plans for conscription of labor in wartime by typically fascist methods. Our expose appeared in the November 26 issue in the form of an open letter to Attorney General Jackson in which we called attention to an article by three of his assistants in the November issue of the* Harvard Law Review. *On page 22 will be found another letter to NM on the same subject from Dr. Harry F. Ward, former chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union and the American League for Peace and Democracy.*

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plete conscription of labor in wartime under "work or fight" orders. Though this preview of the totalitarian state was presented in a form which makes it possible for the administration to disavow it should it prove embarrassing, there has thus far been no attempt to do so on the part of Attorney General Jackson or any other government spokesman. On the contrary, events since our expose appeared, particularly the Jackson and Dies incitements against the Vultee strikers, the bills introduced by both Democrats and Republicans for outlawing strikes in war industries (one of them would impose penalties up to life imprisonment), and the clamor in the press and Congress for compulsory mediation or arbitration underscore the general trend of which the blueprint for fascism drawn up by Mr. Jackson's assistants would be the full consummation. What is today a trickle, tomorrow will be a raging flood unless the people's strength and unity build the dyke to hold it back.

The *New Republic* is pleased to describe the Attorney General's statement siding with the California open shoppers as a "blunder." Blunder it was, but only in the sense that it revealed too nakedly and prematurely the real direction of administration policy. The contrast with the government's conciliatory attitude toward the sitdown strike of the armaments makers only a few months ago was too glaring. The newspaper *PM* of November 29 writes that the FBI report on the Vultee strike, on which Jackson based his anti-labor statement, was in the nature of a forward pass to J. Edgar Hoover from the notorious Capt. William F. (Red) Hynes of the Los Angeles Red Squad, with whom Hoover has worked closely. This Hynes, one of the most unsavory characters in American public life, has been exposed by the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee as a pal of the anti-Semitic Silver Shirts and the fascist Associated Farmers. The Attorney General's later announcement that there was no need for new legislation to deal with the labor situation was an attempt to circumvent the strong protests evoked by his original *obiter dicta*. But let no one be deceived. The administration is here playing the same doublefaced game as in the matter of credits and loans to Britain. Having unleashed the dogs of [illegible]ionism, the government now piously [illegible] hands-off attitude, waiting for the [illegible]nds to catch up with their victim. [illegible]h point the administration will step [illegible]ve him from being torn limb from lim[illegible] reeing that he be handcuffed and sh[illegible] The experience of the World War h[illegible] that it is not necessary formally to o[illegible]ikes. There are other devices for acc[illegible]ng this end. There is, for example, co[illegible] mediation or arbitration.

American wo[illegible]ve experienced two attempts to apply [illegible]ndustries mediation or arbitration tech[illegible]acked by the coercive power of gover[illegible] The first was during the World War, the second was under the NRA. With the campaign for a third attempt already under way, it is well to examine the results of those first two experiences. During the World War, in order to check strikes for better conditions and union recognition which broke out despite the restraining efforts of the Gompers AFL leadership, President Wilson appointed first a mediation commission and then the National War Labor Board. This consisted of five employer and five employee representatives, plus the joint chairmen, William Howard Taft for the employers and Frank P. Walsh for the workers. This board used its influence to dissipate labor militancy and prevent workers from winning their demands. In cases where the members of the board were themselves unable to agree, it was provided that an umpire be appointed whose decision would be final. This was nothing else but compulsory arbitration. How it worked out in practice may be seen from the case of a strike of munitions workers, members of the International Association of Machinists, in Bridgeport, Conn. When they refused to accept the umpire's decision and return to work, President Wilson sent them a letter in which he declared:

> I desire that you return to work and abide by the award. If you refuse, each of you will be barred from employment in any war industry in the community in which the strike occurs for a period of one year. During that time the United States Employment Service will decline to obtain employment for you in any war industry elsewhere in the United States, as well as under the War and Navy Departments, the Shipping Board, the Railroad Administration and all other government agencies, and the draft boards will be instructed to reject any claim of exemption based on your alleged usefulness on war production.

The strikers went back. It should be remembered that in time of war or active preparation for war, practically every factory becomes part of war industry. The Wilson letter was thus a threat to bar the strikers from any employment whatsoever. This is exactly the kind of "work or fight" club against labor which Attorney General Jackson's three assistants now propose. Eventually the National War Labor Board went so far as to refuse to consider the cases of striking workers until they had returned to work. In addition, the board officially sponsored company unions under the euphemistic name of "shop committees," some of which have persisted to the present day. And when the war was over, and the workers sought to secure for themselves some measure of that democracy for which they had been asked to sacrifice, they were greeted by the greatest open-shop offensive in the history of the country, which pulverized union organization in factory after factory and destroyed many of the gains won through years of struggle. To all those who have any illusions about how labor would fare under compulsory mediation and arbitration schemes, particularly in a time of intensive preparation for war, we recommend a reading of International Publishers' new book, *Labor in Wartime,* by John Steuben.

No less disillusioning was the experience with the NRA labor boards. The NRA itself, according to testimony by Gen. Hugh Johnson before the Nye committee, "had grown out of the plans developed by the War Department for the conduct of a future war." And President Roosevelt's own approach to the problem of labor relations was permeated with the coercive spirit of the first world war. Thus, in his speech before the AFL convention in October 1933, Roosevelt cited Wilson's address before the AFL in November 1917 in which the war President threatened to put in a corral "horses that kick over the traces." "Just as in 1917," Roosevelt said, "we are seeking to pull in harness; just as in 1917, horses that kick over the traces will have to be put in a corral."

The NRA labor boards, General Johnson, President Roosevelt, and the AFL bureaucracy used every device of intimidation and cajolery to drive labor into the employers' corral. But their greatest successes, as in the automobile settlement in March 1934 and the short-circuiting of the steel strike and the betrayal of the textile strike a few months later, merely paved the way for the ultimate failure of the whole effort. It failed because the workers persisted in kicking over the traces, built union organization, and utilized the strike weapon to achieve their demands. Their disillusionment was reflected in the popular epithet for the NRA, "National Run-Around." Yet the government's mediation tactics did very real harm, and in three mass-production industries, auto, steel, and textile, they delayed organization a full two years or more. It was only after the workers in these and other industries broke the lethal grip of the AFL hierarchy, while the administration abandoned for a time its anti-labor policy, that thanks to the CIO, organization of the mass-production industries began to move forward.

Today those who counsel a new nationwide attempt at compulsory mediation prefer to overlook the experiences of the World War and the NRA. They cite, instead, employer-employee relations on the railroads as an example of "successful mediation" which can be universally applied. The Railway Labor Act operates through two boards, the National Mediation Board which deals with disputes in connection with new agreements, and the National Railroad Adjustment Board, which handles disputes arising from the interpretation and application of old agreements. The decisions of the adjustment board are enforceable through the federal courts and therefore constitute a form of compulsory arbitration. The mediation board, whose work may be supplemented by special emergency boards, has no powers of compulsion, but the weight of government support tends to discourage strikes in violation of its findings. Moreover, unions are forbidden to strike while the National Mediation Board or an emergency board is investigating their case. Nor can they strike for thirty days after the board has made its report.

What those who urge a similar setup in other industries ignore are the power relations among railroad employers and employees.

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By the time the Railway Labor Act was passed in 1926, the great bulk of the country's railroad workers had been unionized. They had built their organizations literally with their blood in some of the greatest strike battles in American history. The railroad workers have the additional advantage of being one of the most strategically placed sections of the American working class; a strike on the railroads tends to cripple all economic activity, especially since most of the workers are skilled or semi-skilled and cannot easily be replaced. And the twenty-one standard railroad unions, united in the Railway Labor Executives Association, constitute the most powerful combination of labor in the country. It is clear that all these factors make it possible for the representatives of the workers to come to any mediation conference with very strong cards. It is not the generosity or "fairness" of the National Mediation Board, but the organized strength of the railroad workers that has won them many concessions. At the same time, however, the conservative leaders of the railroad brotherhoods have often utilized the mediation machinery to frustrate the wishes of the rank and file. In February 1932, for example, they agreed to a horizontal 10 percent wage cut. Through the intervention of President Roosevelt shortly after he took office, this cut was extended until January 1935, after which it was rescinded piecemeal. The union chiefs have also collaborated with the companies and the government in squeezing more than 700,000 workers out of the industry since 1929, while giving only lip-service to the thirty-hour week without reduction in pay.

What would happen if the mediation machinery of the railroads were set up in other industries? Where unions were well organized and under militant leadership, they might still be able to protect the interests of the workers despite the snares and pitfalls of the mediation system. Even in such industries a compulsory waiting period might seriously weaken the effectiveness of a strike. It would give the employers, the press, and radio, time to spread anti-strike propaganda and perfect a strike-breaking apparatus. Furthermore, in mass-production industries, where most of the workers are unskilled or semi-skilled, it is far easier to replace men than on the railroads. And in factories where unions were just beginning to organize, compulsory mediation would be fatal; inevitably the cards would be stacked for the employers. The campaign for legislation to introduce mediation throughout industry, particularly in a time of mounting war fever like the present, is not the fair and patriotic thing it pretends to be. What it actually seeks is the emasculation and *Gleichschaltung* of the trade union movement and the subordination of the needs of what John L. Lewis has called the "52,000,000 shrunken bellies" to the needs of a voracious war economy controlled by Wall Street.

The Roosevelt administration's developing assault on labor and its whole domestic policy are, in fact, the touchstone of the kind of war it is supporting and preparing to enter. Contrast the administration's attitude toward labor with that of the Spanish republic. In the war of Spanish democracy against fascist treason and invasion the power of the trade unions grew enormously and the workers won many improvements in their conditions. But in the war for profits and empire which American imperialism is already waging against its German rival and in which it is planning to participate directly, the benefits are going to the fascist-minded du Ponts and Fords, while the National Labor Relations Act is being slowly bled white, the efforts of workers to better their conditions are attacked in high places, and new shackles for the people's liberties are being forged. William Green, president of the AFL, outdoing Gompers, has hastened to lend a hand with a pledge that no strikes "for any reason" would be permitted in industries producing war materials for the United States or Britain. But Bill Green cannot bind the workers. And though Rep. Howard Smith, the Roosevelt supporter from Virginia, thinks that strikes in war industries should be outlawed with penalties up to life imprisonment, and though Rep. Clare Hoffman, the Willkie supporter from Michigan, thinks that the CIO campaign to organize the workers of Hitler's friend, Henry Ford, is "subversive," the American workers will not be easily persuaded to yield up their most vital rights and become the helpless prey of those who plunder the country and drive the people to ruin. The recent CIO convention struck out against "foreign entanglements which may in any way drag us down the path of entering or becoming involved in foreign wars." It also unanimously declared:

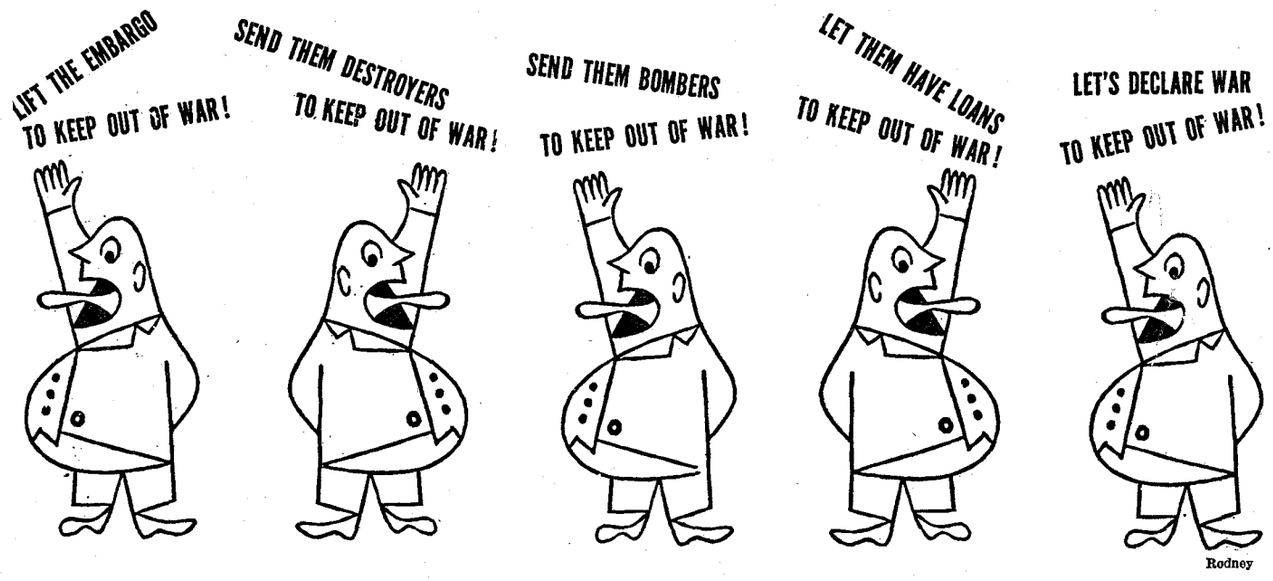
> Labor must be very vigilant to guard against any action which, under the pretense of furthering national defense, will seek to deprive the workers of their fair share of these increased earnings or to deny them their fundamental right to organize into unions of their own choice or to strike.

That is the spirit of the organized workers of America, whether in the AFL or the CIO. And John L. Lewis' call to organize the unorganized points the way not only to the unification of the labor movement, but to the defense of democracy and freedom for the whole people.

Franklin D. Roosevelt may try to play Pandora in this day of evil. But this is the twilight of the gods of capitalism. The dawn belongs to those who walk upon the earth and work and plant new life.

Out of the Mouths of Babes

RODDY MCDOWALL, the eleven-year-old English refugee being tested by Willie Wyler for *How Green Was My Valley*, was answering different questions about the London bombings. Asked by Bob Shaw what had become of the famous Lewis department store, Roddy replied: "The store has been almost completely demolished by incendiary bombs, but the proprietors have put up a sign which reads, 'If you think THIS is bad, you ought to see our branch in Berlin!' "—*From the "Hollywood Reporter," Nov. 11, 1940.*



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Women Are Human Beings

Husband or career, home or work? Ruth McKenney probes the problems, phony and real, of being a woman circa 1940. The first of two articles.

BEING a woman in the United States, circa 1940, is an extremely puzzling, sometimes heartbreaking, and always difficult business. Like the wanderer in the desert, the modern American woman finds life one cruel mirage after another.

A mother works sixty hours on the stretch-out loom for $11.20 a week; she has neither the leisure nor the strength to enjoy her home. But the priests, and the love-lorn columns, and the movies thunder at her: "Women's place is at the hearth!"

"Women dominate our society; they must be relegated to their natural subservient position!" Lewis Mumford and the new school of semi-fascist philosophers argue, while the girl at the office adding machine, who knows she will never have a chance to be promoted, never under the sun, shakes her head and wishes she could dominate things just enough to have the job she'd rate as a matter of course if she were a man.

"Don't be a four-eyed intellectual; you'll never get a husband; men don't make passes at girls who wear glasses!" This frightening dictum overwhelms the modern woman from every nook and corner of the vast propaganda machine, and shakes her heart and mind to their very depths. And why not? It is pretty often true. What normal girl can keep her mind steadily on her work when she is tormented day and night with the terrible fear of loneliness, permanent, enduring, life-long solitude? The glasses-passes joke turns sour before the fate of the intelligent, energetic, successful career spinster. Of course some men marry the girls who like their jobs, but not enough of them to wipe out the young working woman's deadly fear.

STRUGGLE AND CONFLICT

But these things are just the beginning. The modern American woman struggles pitifully or desperately, according to her temperament against the mocking duality of her life-long training—of which one part starts almost in infancy with her first doll. Long before she is an adolescent, the ordinary female youngster has had her natural interest in color and form perverted into the dubious and sterile art of self-decoration; her normal affectionate response to friendship has been pawed over by female relatives until it has been converted into a sex nature and meaningless flirtation. Even more important, by the time she is seven or eight, the usual girl-child is already living with the most tormenting anxiety of her life: the problem of whether she will marry or not. It is needless to blame the mothers who have built up this fear in their girl-children with their half-conscious and endless repetition of the familiar phrases: "If you grow up to be such a dirty little girl and never wash your hands before dinner, you'll never get married," or "Little girls who scream and take away their sister's toys will never get married; husbands only like people who are nicely behaved." The mothers really do not know what they do; in these bitter phrases they reflect the anxieties of their own lives.

With adolescence, this side of the modern woman's training begins with a vengeance. Now mothers really begin to worry; in working-class homes a girl's freedom is often severely curtailed; an anxious father begins mental match-making. In middle-class homes mothers strain the family budget to buy a new dress for the unhappy and bewildered half-child, half-woman. The homely girl, always at a disadvantage even in childhood, begins really to suffer. And all around the adolescent girl is an immense body of propaganda for the dream world of romantic love. Fiction, good or bad, rings a few changes on the story that is always essentially the same: and then they lived happily ever after. This is just as true of Hemingway as it was of Tolstoy. The adolescent girl of today sees the same picture everywhere, in the movies where Greta Garbo either dies for love or gives up an important job for ditto; in the *Ladies Home Journal* and other respectable women's magazines where the heroine stops fooling around with the silly old notion of being a doctor so that she can marry the handsome interne who sensibly thinks a woman's place is in the, etc.; in church, in the pulp magazines—everywhere, everywhere the girl turns, at home, in her club meeting, she is faced with that four-letter word writ in flaming colors: L-O-V-E.

And on the other hand. The modern female child, unlike her grandmother, is trained to be a worker, a useful citizen. She sits side by side in school with boys; she works the same algebra problems, she studies the same history book, she starts out, if she lives in a working-class home, in the same factory, very often doing the same work as her brother. The very same mother who teaches her daughter to primp and roll her eyes, look demure, and wear her hair in rows of elaborate curls, the better to ensnare a husband, will tell her female child fiercely: "You've got to BE somebody. I want my daughter to go to school and get a good job." Usually the mother ends lamely: "In case your husband should die or divorce you, believe me, it's a mighty good thing to fall back on, having a teachers' certificate (or a shorthand diploma, or experience on the looms)."

But the girl sees through this halt excuse about the dreamed-for husband keeling over in his youth or taking to beating his wife as a pastime. Obviously, to the perceptive young, mother wishes (desperately) that she had something else to do except endlessly cleaning and washing and cooking and wiping small noses. Obviously, mother is furiously, hopelessly bored, and she hopes in some vague way that her daughter will be able to escape her fate.

CAREER TRAINING

So the American girl grows up trained for a "career." The working-class girl learns shorthand; she hopes to avoid the factory. The middle-class girl goes to a grass-roots college, usually turning timidly to teaching, but, the more vigorous spirits anyway, frequently studying business or law or medicine or any one of a hundred professions apparently "open" to women.

And then what?

Every American woman knows the old, old story. The factory pays women less for the same work done by men. The office girl can know a business upside down and backwards and forwards, but the best, the very best she can get is a job as private secretary to the boss—and the exceptions to this statement are so rare they rate gushy feature stories in the press. Women cooks get half the price of men cooks. Women doctors, after fifty years of struggle, still fight prejudice, usually end up an obscure assistant in somebody else's office. Women newspaper reporters nearly always work on that deadliest of all assignments, the society page; they're lucky if the Newspaper Guild has organized the plant and raised their wages from the customary $15 a week. Women teachers are allowed to influence the minds of the very young, but only the rare, the beautiful exception can become a full professor, a head of a department in an important college or university—and then it's usually an institution for the female rich. Houseboys get twice the wages (and then terribly little) paid to maids-of-all-work; smart girl lawyers languish as the brains but not the name behind imposing legal facades. And for every woman judge or magistrate there are thousands who starve, staring at their law diplomas. In every single job or profession women can enter in America today, male chauvinism destroys opportunities, makes competition pathetically fierce, keeps wages down to coolie levels.

And if this were all! But the woman herself is torn with the phony problem raised everywhere she turns: husband or career, home or work? Even if she finds a man who has been able to escape his own training, and wants a companion and co-worker, still the American woman broods over her relations to her home. Is she driving her husband away by her absorption in her work? Maybe her husband suffers from her success? Should

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she really put her baby in a pre-school nursery? Is she beginning to look like a frump, how can she get a hair wave every week when she has to mend the socks after work? Why shouldn't her husband help cook and do dishes, he's able-bodied, isn't he? But in that case, wouldn't he begin to think you can carry a good thing, such as women's rights, too far? The married career woman tries to do the impossible: to juggle both the conflicting ideals of her early training, to do a now-you-see-it-now-you-don't act, to start off in the morning in a neat tailored suit, the serious worker, and end up in the evening in a sweet cottage apron, bending with flushed and pretty face over the oven.

No wonder married women who work sometimes collapse in their kitchens and shed weary tears. Few husbands, even the most enlightened, know what a physical and mental strain the career wife faces. The working wife may well envy her husband who, according to all the laws of Dorothy Dix, is allowed to rush right home from his office into the slippers waiting by the fire. The modern American worker-wife has iron in her soul. She stifles the slippers and fire impulse, after a long day at work, to stir up the Hollandaise sauce, vacuum the carpet, do her nails, and write checks for the gas and telephone companies.

FEAR OF INSECURITY

But in spite of all this, the married women with jobs they like are the enormously, the poetically, the terrifically lucky, the one out of a thousand, the women of the future. The immense majority of girls marry to live with the haunting fear of insecurity for themselves and their children. They are driven into the back-breaking jobs in the factories, they scrub the building floors, they work in laundries and sweat shops so that their children may eat. Emancipation of women is an ironic phrase to the pretty girl who marries the boy she loves when she's twenty and stands on the city relief line when she's forty, seeking milk for her babies, meat for her ailing or unemployed husband. Perhaps the working-class woman's fate is made the more bitter by the propaganda against women bred in her husband's bones. The writers for our fancy magazines who toy with the woman question forget that a staggering number of women, right here in the United States, are married to men who, through no fault of their own, believe that women are something less than human beings. For women, the church, the cradle, the backyard gossip; for men, the affairs of the world. The organization of the CIO was probably the greatest step forward in women's rights since the suffrage movement. The CIO, which for the first time granted Negroes identical rights with whites in the union movement, also reached out into working-class homes and drafted the women to work side by side with their husbands in building the union. Most of the members of the women's auxiliaries in the CIO unions have never before in their lives stepped out of their homes, except to do back-breaking and slave-paid labor.

I have little interest or patience with the much talked about fate of the idle upper middle-class or rich woman. No doubt her situation is sad, but her numbers, for all the publicity she gets, are few. It takes money and leisure to belong to even the simplest reading club; it takes position and education to buy tickets for the lecture of the visiting Englishman. There is no doubt that the idle woman is silly, vicious, and ignorant; and there is no doubt that none of these flaws is her fault. She was brought up that way; she was trained to obey the mores of her class. In a shifting and restless society she is out of place and unhappy. It is very tough for her; it is very sad; and it is not very important, one way or the other.

After all, the modern American woman's main problems are security for herself and her family, and a chance to do satisfying work without sacrificing her normal human impulses toward marriage, children, and affection. The idle middle-class or rich woman has opportunity and often education; she has been damaged by her training. In a country where the immense majority of women is schooled in insecurity and hunger, miserably low wages, and blasted opportunities the tragic fate of the retired debutante who is too, too bored with bridge, or the pathetic situation of the wife of the second vice-president who wastes her good brain running a broken down women's literary society can hardly wring anybody's withers.

The important problem is not what to do about idle women, but rather how the ninety percent of American women who work in their homes or outside them can resolve the haunting conflicts of their training, and make a decent, dignified, secure life for themselves.

And the solution to this question is a logical, scientific one—a Marxist one, if I may call it that. The middle-class writers who deal so eloquently with women's problems ordinarily use the very muddiest sort of obscurantist thinking.

So I believe it is well to start off with a scientific fact: women are human beings. Anthropologists have *proved*—it is important to remember that the fact is absolutely proved, beyond a whisper of a doubt—that there is no such thing as a "woman's nature."

Rodney

Just as "human nature" as a fixed point is a perfect absurdity, so all the traits assigned to women by obscurantist thinkers forever and forever are perfect nonsense. A woman is not a "home-maker" because she was born that way; in plenty of primitive tribes men sweep and dust, cook and take care of the children. Women are not less intelligent, less musical, less poetical, less anything, than men. Women are denied the full right of self-expression today and have been denied self-expression at all for centuries; naturally there aren't so many women composers, et cetera, et cetera in history. But modern scientists have absolutely proved that women do not differ in the least from men, as a matter of inheritance, either emotionally or intellectually.

MACHINES

But of course they differ physically. Which brings me to the point of my argument. So long as labor was done by hand, women's position in society was economically inferior to men; this accounts for the long enslavement of women, beginning with the first cultivation of land. Women never differed physically from men as much as the poets and writers would have you believe. All during the period women were fainting from corset stays and love, my great-grandmother was dragging a plow in the fields. But although women, if trained to do physical work from childhood, may grow very strong and enduring, they cannot compete with men in physical labor.

The use of the power-driven machine as a tool created the objective conditions for the complete mental, moral, and intellectual freedom of women. This may not sound very romantic, but it is very true. The moment the power-driven machine appeared, women could take their place side by side with men in the economic system. There is no job today that a healthy woman cannot perform if the machinery is modern and the conditions of work humane. It may be argued that a woman could not work on the assembly lines in Detroit; that is true. But neither can the men. Ten years on the assembly line and a man is finished, literally broken and bent and the life-juice sucked out of him. If production were for use and not profit in this country, the woman could take her place beside her husband on the assembly line; harnessed power can emancipate women forever from their old economic inferiority. Even the bitterly hard job of mining, if it were performed (which in this country it is not) with modern power tools, could be done by women.

So the question arises, but if the machine is supposed to set women free, why hasn't it?

RUTH MCKENNEY.

This is the first part of an essay written for a book-symposium on women's rights. The volume is to be published in New York soon. Next week Miss McKenney will discuss the reasons why the machine has not emancpiated women in America—and what to do about it.

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Manifest Destiny: 1940

White House visions from McKinley to FDR. James S. Allen discusses the transformations in American imperialism's cash-register type of expansionism. Manifest Will waives the rules.

After a long and torturous night, which was finally illumined by a God-given vision, President McKinley called in the army cartographer and instructed him to include the Philippines among the American possessions. Manifest Destiny had descended upon him out of the night and made him see "but one plain path of duty—the acceptance of the archipelago." Since then similar visions have hovered over the White House, now and then choosing to visit its occupant. But never before has any inhabitant of that stately mansion been as receptive to visions of Manifest Destiny as in this year 1940.

It is not entirely a new Manifest Destiny, of course. It was born in the sweet long ago, before the crash of 1929, and long before that, too. Its first faltering steps were taken even as the frontiers were pushed back into the Pacific, as American trade lines extended into the Far East and the countries of the Western Hemisphere. But President McKinley did not have his God-given vision of empire that famous night in the White House until monopolized industry and capital came to dominate the country. And then Manifest Destiny marched and sailed into Havana, Manila Bay, Puerto Rico, picked up a few additional droppings on the wide expanses of the Pacific, and stepped more briskly through the door it had thrust open into China.

A little over a decade was consumed in digesting the new acquisitions, in colonizing some of the overflow capital in these as well as other far-flung regions, in introducing the shrewd Yankee trader to new and suspicious customers, in establishing a mighty navy able to serve authoritative subpenas upon defaulting and reluctant nations, in perfecting the diplomatic formulations for this varied activity.

With the advent of the first world war, Manifest Destiny emerged again from its mundane activities and set forth on a new cycle of expansion. Unlike the other participants in the armed scramble for empire, whose main emphasis was upon direct territorial gain, the American potentates sought primarily to extend their sphe[illegible]nvestment and trade. Expansionism, t[illegible] was not just geographic; it was [illegible]egister type of expansionism which se[illegible] Street billions into Latin America, [illegible] Asia, and Oceania during and after [illegible]r, which rifled the markets of chief c[illegible]ors, Allied or otherwise, and genera[illegible]d havoc with the colonial and sem[illegible]l peoples without formally attaching [illegible] political dependen[illegible] was not fr[illegible] moral scruples that [illegible]erican colo[illegible] did not participate in [illegible]itorial redistribution of the world. It was rather the unbalance which existed between its great economic power and its inadequately developed military and naval strength which prevented the United States from taking permanent possession of juicy colonial morsels. If American imperialism could function increasingly as investor and trader during an extended period of inter-imperialist conflicts, this was due to its great aggregation of industrial power and capital by which it could force other finance capitalist groups to share control of resources and markets.

BRITANNIA'S RULE

But this American brand of imperialist destiny rested upon Manifest Will only as long as God saved the king. For the British empire was the real core of world imperialist relations. Through its dominions and colonies, upon which the well-known sun never set, and through its control of the sea lanes, Britain was the axis around which inter-imperialist relations revolved. The American 400's hankering after royalty, and the respect which reigned in high circles for British stolidity and Kipling were a tribute to the pillars of empire upon which so much American wealth and respectability also rested. This is not to say that the pound and the dollar marched curlicue in curlicue; they always remained fiercely competitive in all aspects of world economy and politics. United States imperialist expansion, while colliding in all parts of the world with the British system, was at the same time parasitic upon it, for the British system served as the fulcrum around which competitive imperialisms carried on their struggles and sought some form of world equilibrium, even temporary.

On the European continent, American trade and investment and also its politics rested upon the system of checks and counter-checks which Britain manipulated to maintain a delicate balance of power. In China, the Washington-sponsored open door could remain open only on the basis of the allocation of spheres of influence among the other world powers, among which Britain held the pivotal position. In the Near East, Britain shared with other powers only what was absolutely indispensable to prevent any serious disturbance of its sway over the Eastern Mediterranean and Suez. By the grace of shrewd reckoning, the Dutch were permitted to hold on to the Indies in a kind of Privy Lord guardianship; but Britain ruled the Straits and everything that was so unfortunate as to lie between the Red Sea and Hongkong. Even the purely American Monroe Doctrine could operate to the advantage of the United States largely because Britannia ruled the waves.

This general relationship was changed little by World War I, although important shifts and qualitative changes took place within the system. Upstart Germany's *drang* was for the time being subdued, new aspirations were kindled in Japan which were to seek fulfillment only later; Italy emerged badly shattered but also wiser, particularly about the nature of British promises, and the United States assumed a position in world economy too powerful for Britain's liking.

One outcome of the war, the Russian Bolshevik Revolution, became the horrible nightmare of all the Manifest Destinies there were in the world. It was the Anti-Everything, certainly everything ever held "worth while," especially the system whereby Britain managed to settle the affairs of the world. In the peculiar terminology of the dealers in Manifest Destiny, Soviet became the synonym for devil. If this new *thing* were to continue, it would in time upset that neat ever-shifting inter-imperialist equilibrium and polarize around itself all the forces whose destiny is to confound the Manifest Destiny. The Soviet Union did continue, and did prosper and in time came to alter the fundamental interconnection of all social forces in the world.

This was one factor, as World War II broke out, which fundamentally disturbed the empire-seekers and showed the world that there was another solution possible and probable other than the one of merely transferring nations, markets, spheres of influence, and colonies from one world-wide empire to another. From 1917 to the present day, the main concern of Britain was to shape world affairs in such a manner as to prevent the new socialist aggregation of nations from unbalancing that five-sixths world-wide equilibrium of empire, which rested primarily upon the British system.

DESTROYED DOMINANCE

The second important factor which is placing the whole British imperial system in question is the war itself. It is Britain's vast colonial set-up which the three Axis powers are now attempting to shatter, dismember, and reallocate among themselves. After one year of war they have already destroyed British dominance over Europe and are attempting its reorganization under German imperialist hegemony. The French and Dutch empires hang together only by a tenuous thread and their various possessions have now become the loot of war. The Mediterranean and Balkan phase of the struggle now opening is directed at Britain's Suez-Near Eastern network of empire, endangering, as well Britain's hold upon India, the Malay Straits, and the African possessions. In the Far East, Britain is fighting a rear-guard battle. In China, her position has already been completely undermined by the successful resistance of China to Japan and the dislocation of the former system of spheres of influence. Japan is closing in on Hongkong, has already begun to take possession of Indo-

(Continued on page 10)

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China, and is preparing a thrust for the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, and probably the Philippines.

The undermining of the British world structure is bringing about a rapid qualitative change in American expansionism. Economic penetration and dollar diplomacy, which accommodated themselves to the British imperial axis, although often at the expense of Britain, must now increasingly be assured their own base of operation in terms of territorial acquisitions and well-defined spheres of influence safeguarded by military might. The present phase of this re-shaping of American Manifest Destiny remains closely linked with Britain's fortunes, but also concerns itself with taking full advantage of her misfortunes. It is not only a question of sharing with Britain the burden of defending the empire, but also of taking over the burden of the empire itself.

The nocturnal visions which now descend upon the occupant of the White House put McKinley's puny dreams to shame. Manifest Destiny 1940 encompasses the world. The early empire builders and empire aspirers in their narrow vision could not foresee that the time would come when the great British empire would be seriously endangered by an array of imperialist powers, stunted and decadent but nevertheless still in possession of physical might. They could not foresee that they would twice in the course of a quarter century be called upon to safeguard their most formidable competitor on the world markets in order to maintain and increase their share of these markets. Nor could they foresee that the United States would be called upon so quickly to shoulder the burden of a world imperialist system which is being disintegrated as much by the gathering strength of the common people as by struggle among the imperialists themselves.

NEW VISIONS

In the present tempests, the new visions strike like lightning, illuminating a path towards new and vast territorial acquisitions. This time, unlike in World War I, American imperialism is attempting to build its armed might to a level commensurate with its economic power. To take and to hold over such vast expanses of the globe as are now being made available means the ability to strike with every military arm developed to its fullest. To establish hegemony over the Americas means to establish that right by possession, direct or indirect. To hold Japan at bay in the Far East means to establish far-flung fighting outposts in the Pacific, jutting salients into existing empires and remnants of empires. Aid to Britain, a see-sawing diplomacy in the Far East, the falsetto tone of the good neighbor to the South, are all essentially delaying actions aimed at prolonging the existing armed conflicts, weakening the other imperialisms, keeping them as much as possible within their present theaters in order to strengthen the imperialist positions of the US and gain time to build armaments.

Mingled with McKinley-like visions are the nightmares of premature collapse of the belligerent powers, revolution in Europe, upsurge of revolutionary nationalism in the vast colonial world, greater maturity and developing independence of the working class at home, and the increasingly powerful position of the Soviet Union as the world bastion of anti-imperialism.

As American imperialism enters the present phase it is already shaping the beginning of a new world empire. The right of eminent domain has been registered for Canada; American bases on British islands complete the ring of steel around the Caribbean. The French island possessions in the Caribbean and off Newfoundland are there for the taking; the more valuable Dutch possessions of Curacao, Aruba, and Guiana are clearly marked on the tally sheet. A more complicated and extended task is to sweep the Latin-American countries within the unchallenged orbit of the new empire. Air and naval bases in Mexico, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Colombia, and Costa Rica are the more immediate objectives; intensified economic penetration and political domination are the longer range tasks which have been set.

With regard to the Far East, Manifest Destiny has not yet granted equal clarity of vision to all in the higher ranks. But despite divided counsels as to the advisability of immediate war with Japan, the first steps have already been taken toward naval collaboration with the British in negotiations for American use of the bases at Hongkong, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. The juiciest colonial plum in the world available at the moment is the Dutch East Indies, and this fruit hangs temptingly within the reach of the American empire builders. The Indies, together with British Malaya and Australia, are the Pacific lock to the Indian Ocean, to India, the Red Sea, Suez, and the Near Eastern and African possessions.

Ambitions and dreams run riot as the United States embroils itself more rapidly in the European war and stakes out its claims around the world. Today Manifest Destiny speaks in a voice of flame and thunder and calls its minions to lay waste the world. American imperialism today sets forth to conquer and to rule over far-flung regions in order to safeguard and extend its sphere of world power. The old, mainly cash-register phase is gone; the new phase, based on territorial acquisition and militarily safeguarded spheres opens. How far it will proceed, whether even its first major steps will be successful, depends upon the course of the inter-imperialist conflict, the sweep of the colonial anti-imperialist movement, the maturing of class conflicts at home, the extension of the socialist world.

JAMES S. ALLEN.

Answer

When rain turns to snow
and the arc-lights are lonely,
and darkness breaks from the night
to cross in the circle of light,
When shadows fanning like scythes
leap on the battlements—
and in the same hour
the well-fed, the names that are known,
the beloved,
lie crushed in a sudden rubble
of all their proud years and possessions—

What can be said to them?

crouched in the bladewind
whittling close to the marrow,
like old nails bent through the timber of night,
with shoulders hunched against expected blows,
with trained, philosophical eyes seeing at last
consumed by the blue-print armored
and throwing out flame?

What can be said?

No tears nor pity are needed.
There is a riddle here no dying will solve,
Say to them clearly;
It is plain murder and treachery
It is all profits and power
Leaving us only the answer
Of a complete revolt.

ALEXANDER F. BERGMAN.

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They Fought for Spain

Lion Feuchtwanger and Lillian Hellman ask your aid for the real defenders of democracy.

DURING these last years, so much misery has stricken the world that the feelings of even the best and most charitable were bound to be dulled. Therefore, it seems of little avail to ask help for a certain selected group of miserable people; and when I was requested to address you asking your assistance for those Spaniards who are now slowly rotting in France, I was reluctant. I accepted nevertheless. I witnessed their noble struggle, then, later on I visited their camps and saw their misery with my own eyes, and, finally, I experienced a similar fate myself and had to live under similar conditions. Well, we German refugees had to undergo the same painful experience, the experience namely, that people whom we had to suppose to be our natural allies, treated us rather badly, so that it almost borders on treachery.

Now, for the Spaniards, it was much worse. They fought for democracy till exhaustion. They had been betrayed in the most evil manner, and now they come, beaten and helpless, over the mountains to their friends, to the other great land of democracy, and, really, there they find shelter. But what kind of shelter? They are crowded together, on a strip of waste land, surrounded by barbed wire, and they are told: here you are, here you may stay, but you are not allowed to come outside. So, there they live, they vegetate, there is no drinking water, the climate is rough and they are without any protection. Diseases break out—dysentery, typhoid fever. Finally on an icy winter night, some hundred escape and seek refuge in a church nearby. Presently, these Spaniards, fighters for democracy, have to see that the press of their befriended democracy assail them as rabble, as brigands, and scoundrels. But in parliament, ringing speeches are delivered about French hospitality, and the Spaniards are branded as ungrateful. I talked with Spanish officers, never in my life did I encounter such exasperation. With the eyes of hatred, those men foresaw what would happen in France, they prophesied to us who were incredulous that the French fascists would deliver their country to Hitler as their own fascists had done.

And now, indeed, it has come true.

There they are, those Spaniards, the best, the tested fighters for democracy. After the hardest sufferings and the bravest fight, they have been ejected from their own country. They have sought refuge in their neighboring democracy, and now the neighboring democracy, too has fallen into the hands of the same dictators. There they are, helpless, exhausted from four years of fight and hardship, their hearts full of well-founded bitterness and their minds full of well-founded doubts whether conceptions of humanitarianism, solidarity, generosity are more than words.

And then, unexpectedly, a new hope arises. A land over sea tells those desperate men: we will give you shelter, passports, come.

The government of Mexico promises that it will provide all official aid to assure the safe transport of those Spanish republican refugees, incarcerated in France, to Mexico.

It is as though men shipwrecked, after years of hopelessness and starvation, see a ship pass.

But now, will they be able to catch this ship? It is a ridiculous question and it is a big one. It is no longer a question of politics and principles, it is just a question of several thousand dollars. And yet, it is a question of principles: Since for several thousand men, the answer, whether these dollars will be raised or not, decides the question whether there is still humanitarianism in this world.

That is why I accepted, in spite of all, to speak to you. Therefore I beg of you to help these Spaniards. Among the millions who are in need of help, there are not many who are more worthy and more deserving.

LION FEUCHTWANGER.

THE Spanish Civil War began on a warm summer day in July 1936. It ended in a defeat for democracy in February 1938. In those days, when hundreds of thousands of Spanish republicans and Internationals were crossing the bridge into France, all of us became part of that defeat. Each time, in any part of the world, on any day, when the cause of the common man goes under, some part of all of us goes under with it. All democracy has a direct wire to all of us.

That February seems a long time ago. For the 150,000 republicans living in concentration camp misery, it must seem a lifetime. Behind barbed wire, in cold, in starvation, in sickness, these men and women and children have lived to see a fascist Europe. How many warnings they gave us! How often they told us that behind General Franco were the armies and the supplies of Hitler and Mussolini! How often they begged England and France and the United States to allow them to exercise their legal right to buy supplies, offering in exchange their own lives, and the lives of their wives and children. We all know now how the English and French comedy of non-intervention was played out behind the revolting face of hypocrisy—the comedy which gave Hitler to understand the real friendliness of the men who were pretending to be his enemies.

There are many of us today who admit that the world confuses us, many of us who wish to think out the issues for ourselves, many of us who find that the simple arguments of that increasing, vocal army of people who know everything, do not suffice for us. Bitterness and regret for the mistakes of the past—and the Spanish mistake was a very great one—is useless and sterile. It was done, it is too bad, it is up to us to try to remedy it. One line of remedy is clear.

In many places, on that July day when the fascists decided to make war, men and women attacked cannon and machine guns with shot guns, and when those failed, charged in with bare hands. I did not see those early days, but I did see a few weeks in 1937. It was a noble sight. There should be no comparisons in horror and in bravery, but without heat in winter, with a near-starvation diet, with threadbare clothes—with all the marks of the poverty they have always known in Spain—forgotten by the great of the world, with few planes, few guns, little protection against either, these people stood up and took it for you and me.

The days of their defeat and their retreat into France are almost two years ago. With them, in the retreat, came the surviving members of the International Brigades. These were men who had come from all over the world to form for what, to me, at least, are still the bravest fighting legions we have seen in modern times. The people of France took them in. The government of France either could not, or did not, want to treat them with the generosity her own retreating armies had once received from the Swiss. These Spaniards and Internationals who were the first, militant anti-fascist fighters and victims of Europe, were, from the beginning, treated badly. But if the early days of the concentration camps were of a misery we here have never seen, they at least gave safety. France was democratic. Franco was safely over one border, Hitler safely over another. Times have changed. Hitler is no longer over the border. North and east of these anti-fascists is death; south of them is death; their own small world of the concentration camp is no longer in a democratic France.

There were days, not so long ago, when a political refugee was honored and welcomed by the liberals of every country in the world. But the places where he can be welcomed have each month grown fewer. In America, Mexico has proved the most warm hearted and generous in taking in these anti-fascists. Of all the American republics she has been the most grateful to these brave men and women. Once again, she offers them a safe place to put their heads. We must raise the money to bring them here. The Vichy government has consented to release them, Mexico will take them. We must make possible the *first* American Rescue Ship Mission. A ship is now being negotiated for. The problem is funds—immediately—for a cash deposit. Your support can do this.

We, the ordinary people of America, must save those extraordinary ordinary people.

LILLIAN HELLMAN.

Both these articles by Mr. Feuchtwanger and Miss Hellman were originally delivered over the radio on November 29 and subsequently released to the press. They are published here, slightly abridged.—The Editors.

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Crucifying Neutrality

Having done all the spadework these past eight months, the administration prepares to pave the rest of the road to war with gold. The proposal of loans. An editorial.

SOME ten days ago, it will be remembered, Lord Lothian, the British ambassador, stepped off a clipper from London to request American "finance" as well as munitions and airplanes by 1941. This was the first reference from so official a source to one of the most explosive issues in American politics. This request is now whipping up a most revealing public debate, which, more than any other event of the past twelve months, discloses the inner meaning and true motivations of American imperialist policy.

First of all, the reaction of some of the liberals is most characteristic. In an editorial last week, the *New Republic* discusses the proposal of loans something as follows: Did you mention the word "money," milord?, it asks. Why of course you shall have it! And we shall not soil our own conscience, or create regrettable issues for the future, by insisting upon something in return. You must take the American dollars as an outright gift, nothing less. And would a billion dollars a year be enough? Thus the *New Republic* carries on the vainglorious pretense that world affairs are managed like the Thanksgiving Day dinner on a Connecticut farmstead. In a truly holiday spirit, with touching generosity, the editors insist upon carving up the turkey themselves. And will Lord Lothian have another helping of white meat? and cranberry sauce?

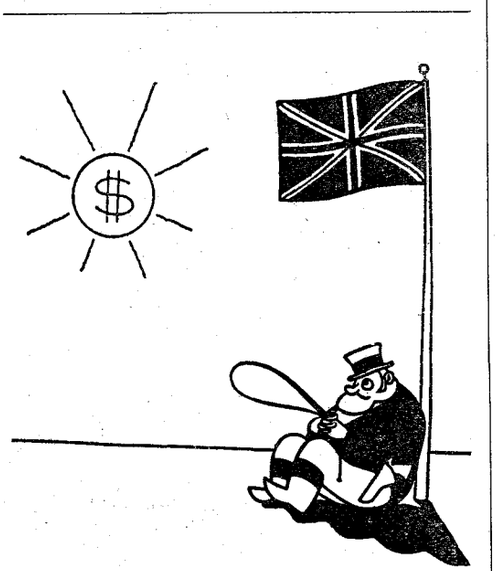
THE REAL ISSUES

But the reaction in Wall Street and Washington is far less expansive, far more sober. According to observers, the administration is in no great hurry to hand out American credits. The men who rule and run America want to know whether our British cousins have come across with every possible pound sterling in their exchequer. And the question which follows is what our valiant Anglo-Saxon brothers will give in return for hard cash? Here a certain division of opinion arises. One section of the press insists that we must never again be played for suckers, and as collateral for loans Britain must hand over every bit of real estate in this hemisphere: Jamaica, British Honduras, Guiana, and envious eyes are even cast upon Canada. There is, however, another more subtle counsel, and this is apparently the President's own position. Washington is prepared to give loans, but only after the Bank of England has dug deeply into its gold reserves, handed over most of the securities which British citizens have invested in the United States, and perhaps also some of the most lucrative British investments in Argentina, Africa, and elsewhere. The State Department does not seem to be interested, at least for the moment, in ousting the British from territorial possession of their colonies: after all, the Tories have so much more experience in dealing with "the natives," don't you know?

Thus, the real issues of this war emerge beyond question. True to its historic policy, American imperialism intends to achieve the maximum gains with the minimum of responsibility. By the device of aiding Great Britain, the American ruling class intends to subordinate the British empire to its own. The syrupy chatter about a joint defense of "our way of life" is quite all right for the *New Republic,* for Dorothy Thompson, for the Town Meetings of the Air. The real objectives in this war are hard and material: the extension of the rule of the dollar, the ouster of the British from their own imperialist position; and so long as Britain gives the assurance that she will continue to fight, Wall Street and Washington will consider financing this fight in due time.

THE TRUE FACTS

The fact is that John Bull is not the indigent beggar Lord Lothian would have us believe. As of July 31, 1940, the United Kingdom had some $2,000,000,000 in gold reserves, about $350,000,000 in short term holdings and dollar balances, something less than a billion in American stocks and bonds, and something more than a billion directly invested in railroads, factories, and real estate. This makes a total of close to $5,000,000,000. In the first year of the war, Britain has bought more in this country than she has sold, making an unfavorable trade balance of some $700,000,000; but this has been cancelled out by the cautious sale of securities on the American market plus the production of Canadian and South African gold mines. It is true that the British have on order some $2,500,000,000 worth of munitions and war goods. But, in the first place little of this need be paid for until the spring of 1942; secondly, Britain is making a fierce drive for exports in the world markets, while the continued sale of securities plus the proceeds of gold mining will tend to balance her purchases here. This does not take into consideration the holdings of Canadian capitalists, nor does it include the property of the Dutch, Belgian, Norwegian, and similar governments, whom Churchill has pledged to re-establish. The October 1940 National City Bank letter concludes an exhaustive analysis of the British position as follows: . . ."the conclusion is warranted that only a comparatively small part of the $5,000,000,000 of liquid assets and gold held here at the beginning of the war have been paid out, and that the ability of the Empire to finance heavy purchases here is not yet strained."



Why then does Lord Lothian raise the controversial question of loans so soon? Obviously, because quite apart from *when* and *whether* Britain needs money, this issue can be used as a crowbar to open up the larger question of American cooperation with Britain. Here lies its most sinister feature, for the issue of loans is merely an aspect of the larger campaign which is now going on to widen American intervention, to force an actual declaration of war.

In the last week, we have been treated to a rather transparent but highly significant play: although Churchill has been assuring the British people that all goes well, and victory is certain, even if far off, the British ministry of information suddenly clamped the censorship down on news to America, and then just as suddenly loosened the censorship, thus permitting a flood of stories that England faces imminent catastrophe unless something more is done on this side of the ocean. This amounts to a lateral pass from the British Foreign Office, and that great broken field runner, William Allen White, catches it neatly. After a week-end in Washington during which he saw the President, William Allen White has issued a new statement of policy for his committee, going far beyond even a nominal neutrality. A campaign is now in full swing to permit American destroyers to convoy goods from Canada to the war zones, to junk the neutrality laws completely, and to allow American ships and sailors into the war zones. All of this, as our editorial last week discussed in detail, is part of a new phase of American policy characterized by very sharp bargaining between British and American imperialism, as prelude to an actual declaration of war. One might say that Martin Dies' revelations about Nazi espionage fit into this pattern for they obviously are designed to

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pave the way for a rupture of diplomatic relations with Germany. And in the background the President bides his time. In the meaningful dispatch of Turner Catledge, NY *Times* correspondent, on November 26, "the President and his advisers are awaiting further clarification of popular support for British aid before proceeding." Yes, indeed, how much is concealed and how much is revealed by the words *"further clarification!"*

Five years ago the Nye committee thoroughly explored the role of loans in getting us into the last war. The findings of that committee expressed the deep disillusion of the masses of people with the outcome of the war; they were in fact a resolve that the same thing should never again be repeated. In its report No. 944, Part 6, the Nye committee found that "loans to belligerents militate against neutrality . . . especially when used to convert this country into an auxiliary arsenal for the belligerent who happens to control the seas, for that arsenal then becomes the subject of the military strategy of the belligerent." Further, in the opinion of the Nye committee "when the responsibility for the sale of such loans is placed . . . in the hands of any one large banking group, as was done in the case of J. P. Morgan & Co. . . . where out of some two and a half billion of Allied indebtedness, J. P. Morgan & Co. arranged for or managed some $1,900,000,000, the concentrated influence and power of such loans on the neutrality of public opinion can be greatly accentuated . . . that when the banking houses . . . are also financially interested in munitions companies depending upon for continued profits foreign orders, the foreign belligerents have the power of securing the support of banking houses . . . through favors to the munitions companies. . . ." The committee found further "that the export of war commodities to the Allies resulted in a widespread expansion of almost all lines of American business . . . and as a result by 1916 there was created a tremendous industrial machine, heavily capitalized, and dependent upon the purchasing power of the Allies." The commercial interdependence established between the United States and the Allies prior to the war, says this report, "involved as a war necessity the financial support of the Allies after our entry into the war. . . ." And this is how the government came to loan some $7,000,000,000 to the British and French governments, which went to pay off the claims of private investors, to support the allied currency, and even, after the war, to the White Russian armies. It was these funds which were, as we know, eventually defaulted.

PLAYS MORGAN'S ROLE

Re-reading these findings today is a chilling, a truly frightening experience. In every essential Mr. Roosevelt is paralleling the course of Woodrow Wilson. And the differences between 1940 and 1916 simply make the situation into which we have been driven even more sinister. It is true that American imperialism is pursuing a shrewder policy than it did before the last war, for through the technique of "aid to Britain," it has derived enormous profit from the war without heavy foreign financing. It is true that the current war boom has not developed in agricultural commodities, but this only emphasizes that the monopolists of basic industry have become even more parasitic upon the whole people with the passing of a generation. To be sure, the war boom results partially from our own rearmament program, but that only underlines the fact that, so far from preparing to stay out of the war, we are preparing to get in. To be sure, J. P. Morgan and Co. are no longer in the forefront of events. But that is only because *the President himself, ostensibly the President of all the people, has taken over J. P. Morgan's role, is doing the job which the Morgans themselves might not be able to do as effectively.* And if today, it is hardly suggested that private enterprise float loans to the belligerents, that is because in these twenty-five years the government *has come to personify and administer the interests of American imperialism as a whole.*

Does it have to be argued any longer where such a course is taking us? Does it have to be argued that the original policy of "aid short of war" now proves to have been a deception, for its underlying assumption was always war at some later date? Does it have to be argued that if the big monopolists clean the British out of positions in Latin America, that benefits only the big monopolists and not the average American—and this alone exposes the character of the war? Do we have to emphasize again the criminal mockery of a situation in which, after passing neutrality laws on the basis of the bitter experience and disillusion of an older generation, these laws are now being systematically abandoned in the face of an emergency during which they should be enforced?

The present moment is really an interlude, a moment of haggling between Churchill and Roosevelt. The forces of war and fascism are venturing upon ever more dangerous ground, for when they urge the complete abandonment of neutrality, they actually expose the hypocrisy of their peace pretensions in the last year. By the logic of its own policies, the administration is flying in the face of its declared assurances of peace. It is therefore a moment of which the many-millioned forces for peace can still take advantage, for as it continues its course, the administration reveals ever more clearly its own fear of the masses. All the more reason to awaken, while there is time, to the fatal treachery which is being prepared behind our backs.

From the Horse's Mouth

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, the sage of Emporia, Kan., has pulled a boner. It is such a first class boner that the New York *Times,* the protector of public morality, was compelled to take the sage to task in a leading editorial the very next morning. It seems that William Allen White, who is chairman of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, was awarded a medal for "outstanding service in publicity" by the National Association of Accredited Publicity Directors, Inc., in New York on November 27. In return, White made a speech in which he told the inside story of his manifold activities these past six months.

"Our first job," he declared in characteristically business-like language, "was to send the destroyers to England. . . . Taking the number fifty was 'pure hunch,' but I want to say that *we've never had an objective that wasn't approved in advance by the general staffs of the United States Army and Navy.*"

To continue: "We organized 700 branch chapters throughout the country and asked them to get leading middle-class people, doctors, lawyers, merchants, and so on, *the kind of people Congressmen pay attention to,* to write letters to the White House. . . .

"We put General Pershing on the air, but the really smart trick we pulled was that after Lindbergh made his speech *we put his mother-in-law on the air*—and was that a face card? It was!"

There was more in the same vein, and if the subject-matter weren't so serious, NEW MASSES would join in the merriment. In fact, the alarm of the New York *Times* at such talk was richly amusing. For what is the good man saying?

First, that when such figures as Pershing and Mrs. Dwight Morrow go on the air in their own names, they have actually been stage-managed in advance;

Second, that everything which the William Allen White committee is doing has the advance approval not only of the administration but of the general staff of the Army and Navy;

Third, that the William Allen White committee itself is an association "of the kind of people Congressmen pay attention to";

Fourth, that the British Foreign Office hardly needs its own propaganda agency in this country, what with William Allen White and his committee on the job;

Fifth, the "spontaneity," the effervescence of "public opinion" these last six months is revealed as the publicity achievement of Mr. White's "front organization."

Indeed, this will be interesting to honest men and women who have lent their time and prestige to William Allen White's cause. No matter how the *Times* tries to cover up, the damage is done. The sage of Emporia might have been drunk that night on Kansas corn liquor—or perhaps self intoxicated by the prospect of having almost singlehanded brought the American people to the verge of war!

Free for Nothing

"STRONG, FREE FRANCE ENVISAGED BY PETAIN; Liberalism, Capitalism, Socialism All to Be Barred, He Says."—*Headline in New York "Times."*

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Revolt against King Henry

Ford's open-shop citadel is being stormed by the UAW's legions. Simon Gerson takes a trip through the V-eight domain. No more ulcers on the conveyor belt.

Detroit.

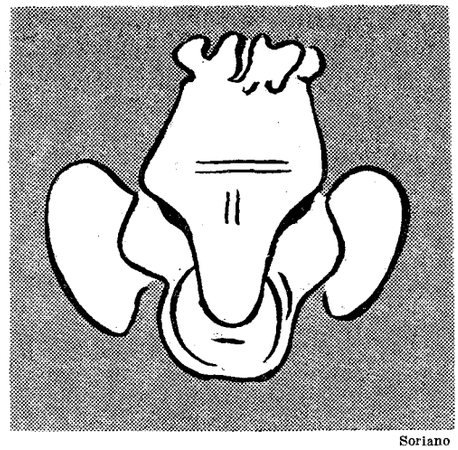
GOING the rounds of the auto city these days, is the story of Henry Ford at his grandson's recent wedding. It seems that everything went off serenely, all orange blossoms and lace, until the preacher pronounced the fatal words: "I now bless this *union.*" Henry, who was absorbed in conversation with Al Smith, just got the tail end of the ceremony with its benediction, promptly fainted, and was brought to only after considerable difficulty and reassurance that the union in question was not affiliated to the CIO.

No Detroiter vouches for the authenticity of the yarn, but it is being told and retold at union rallies to resounding guffaws. And, most important, it is meeting a ready response among the Ford workers themselves. It illustrates how the great Ford myth is being shattered. King Henry is no longer untouchable. That, perhaps, is one of the signs that Henry's empire, historic citadel of the open shop, will be won by the legions of unionism.

For a picture of the H. G. Wellsian fantasy that is Fordiana you have to visit the flivver king's River Rouge plant in Dearborn, near Detroit. Not the immaculate Ford rotunda and the smooth-running, robin's-egg blue bus nor even the guide's suavities ("The plant covers 12,000 acres, now employs about 88,000 men, and pays an average of $7.28 a day") prepare one for the shock. Overwhelming is the word. There are steel mills, processing plants and construction factories combined, with 100 miles of railroads and incongruously gay red and black engines puffing up and down tracks. Barges, piled high with red iron ore from Ford mines, lie on the river that winds through the plant's grounds. This is the Ford domain, no question about it. And the fantastic assembly chamber—a forest of crank shafts hanging from a moving conveyor belt with men twisting, turning, hammering them in Disney-like gnome fashion. The men hardly look up at the tourists; not even a faint attempt to ogle the attractive school teachers in the party. The conveyor belt is moving too fast; the speed is inhuman. (Only youth can keep it up; there weren't two gray heads in the whole mass of moving machinery.)

NO SMILING

A worker visitor behind me, a union shop steward in another plant, whispered: "Didja notice—not a single smile in the joint?" It was true. Dull-eyed men were trying to keep up with the maddening belt. The atmosphere is pervaded with a sort of controlled hysteria. At one point the belt slowed down and the workers leaned wearily against the conveyor frame. Our friend whispered again: "See that? Over in our own plant we'd be crackin' a joke in the minute or two there was no work; these



Soriano

guys can't, or if they could, don't want to."

Near the end of the assembly line the tension mounts. The motor, wheels, steering gear, and body have been attached to the frame as it glides past on the never ending belt. More and more men are hammering, clawing, tightening. The climax comes in the last few operations where the men sit down on a carpet-like arrangement that moves at the same speed as a conveyor, permitting the worker a few more precious seconds to complete his operation. One of the tools is fitted on what appears to be a guide rail running next to the conveyor. This tool box, believe it or not, is *kicked* back by one squatting worker to his buddy up front along the conveyor. I thought it simply a peculiarity of the particular worker, but my friend from the unionized plant shook his head soberly. "They're supposed to do that," he whispered. "That saves a few seconds."

It's no wonder that the local insane asylums are filled with men who have once worked in the Ford plant, and that nervous indigestion is so common. It is supposed to be a Ford worker who wrote home after two years work: "Feeling fine, hitting on all eight ulcers."

Organizing Ford has been a problem before the labor movement for decades. The treachery of the AFL hierarchy is in large part responsible for the present open shop status. But there is also a host of other reasons. In the first place there was the Ford high-wage myth. It was only through organization in competitive plants that wages in General Motors and Chrysler are now ten cents an hour more than they are at Ford's. Ford methods of hiring workers have one major objective—to defeat in advance the possibility of union organization. Employment is therefore spread over many nationalities. Especially sought are Southerners and farm boys, unfamiliar with labor organization.

The job-selling racket in the Ford system has also been a factor against unionization. In this racket certain Ford agents sell passes to workers for sums ranging from $50 up. This pass sends a worker to the employment office where he is quickly put on. Politicians to whom Ford owes favors are often paid off in passes. The system has kicked back against Ford, because workers had to be fired arbitrarily in order to make room for those who had bought jobs or gotten them through pull. This lack of security and resentment against favoritism in the plant is undoubtedly one of the driving forces for organization. Ford workers envy the relative security and seniority won in the unionized plants.

SERVICE DEPARTMENT

The most immediate and powerful weapon against organization of Ford is the so-called service department, headed by Harry Bennett. Its chief aim is to plant stool pigeons, and by intimidation and terror to prevent union activity. The service department is necessarily composed of thugs, ex-pugs, and the dregs of the Detroit underworld. A favorite Bennett trick is to get imprisoned hoodlums paroled in his custody and place them in the service department where they can tenderly carry the message of Fordism to the workers. According to a partial list published by the United Automobile Workers, CIO, Ford or Bennett in recent years have had paroled to them eighteen ex-convicts imprisoned for robbery, two for murder in the second degree, two for rape, two for manslaughter, one for gross indecency, and literally dozens of others sent up for assault, larceny, embezzlement, forgery, etc.

While there is some speculation as to why Ford was not unionized during the wave of organization that developed about the period of the General Motors strike, none of it is sound. The fact of the matter is that years of preparation were necessary before it even became possible to think of storming the Ford citadel. Today the situation is rotten ripe for unionism. First, the UAW has consolidated its strength with more than 400,000 members and union contracts in scores of plants, including every giant in the motor field except Ford. The tangible gains scored in the other plants have not been lost on the Ford workers. Second, the union has rid itself of former President Homer Martin and everything he stood for. Finally, Ford is dropping steadily in relation to his competitors because of a tacit union labor and progressive boycott. From about 55 percent of the total sales in the automobile market, Ford has slipped to about 25 percent. From sales rooms throughout the country groans of protest may be heard. What with millions of union men who won't buy a Ford because of Henry's anti-labor policies, and millions of Americans who won't buy the product of a Hitler medal wearer and pur-

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veyor of anti-Semitism, the sales slogan has changed from "Watch the Fords Go By" to "Pass the Ford Car By." While the Ford Organizing Committee has taken a hands-off attitude on this question, it points out that a collective bargaining agreement with the union should go far to remove the unspoken trade union boycott on Ford cars.

An impressive discipline and efficiency characterize the organizing drive. In order to keep the campaign out of the troublesome inner-UAW situation that prevailed some months ago and has not been entirely eliminated, John L. Lewis appointed as director Michael F. Widman, Jr., a former miner and CIO assistant national director of organization. Widman, a solidly built, simply dressed man in his forties, had just returned from the Atlantic City convention of the CIO when I saw him. "The drive," he said, "is going just four times as fast as I expected. What we've done this time is to avoid the mistakes of the past. We're not concentrating on the key departments; we're appealing to all the men."

CIO MEANS BUSINESS

This is no amateurish drive. It would gladden the heart of a William Z. Foster. The entire city of Detroit has been mapped out by blocks and the number of Ford workers in each block is listed. A crew of forty-seven paid organizers, assisted by literally hundreds of rank and file volunteer organizers working out of thirty-seven sub-offices, ring doorbells night after night, distribute tons of literature, and hold constant meetings. A regular radio program over one of Detroit's popular stations is also bringing the message of unionism to Ford workers. Of importance, too, is the way in which the entire union membership is being mobilized to win Ford. In each local—Plymouth, Chrysler, etc.—Ford organizing committees are set up and the local members go after friends working in the Ford plants. A button given out by the Ford organizing committee is worn proudly all over town: "I Got My Ford Member—Did You?" Special attention is paid to organizational work among those of foreign extraction. The Poles, the largest single nationality at the Ford plants, receive special literature from a committee headed by state Sen. Stanley Nowak, a progressive Democrat and staff member of the Ford organizing committee. The drive has in its special fund $100,000, half from the CIO and half from the auto union. No doubt about it, these lads mean business.

Henry Ford and Harry Bennett are by no means asleep. They have been firing workers by the dozens, but this shotgun method has also had its limitations—non-union workers are cleaned out along with unionists. To absorb the shock somewhat, other local unions have adopted a policy of accepting Ford casualties as frequently as possible. Thus victimization has been reduced considerably.

Dearborn, home of the River Rouge plant, is as much a part of the Ford empire as his assembly line. Its chief of police is Carl A. Brooks, who for years was a Ford service man under Bennett. When Clyde Ford, cousin of Henry, was mayor of Dearborn, he was told by Harry Bennett to appoint Brooks as police head. Justice of the Peace Leo Schaefer, who regularly jails leaflet distributors, is part owner of the highly lucrative luncheon concession at the Ford plant which nets him and his family about $50,000 a year. Recently, the union made public a photostatic copy of a check paid by Judge Schaefer to the Liberty Legion of America, a fink organization which was disbanded by the National Labor Relations Board as Ford-dominated.

However, a peculiar situation has arisen in Dearborn. It seems that one Justice of the Peace, Lila Neunfelt, has the queer notion that there is a Bill of Rights and that it is applicable to union organizers and leaflet distributors. Recently twenty-five men were arrested for handing out leaflets at the Ford plant. Fourteen of them were brought before Judge Schaefer and promptly sentenced; the eleven who were brought before Judge Neunfelt were just as promptly freed.

Anti-Ford measures have little chance of getting through the present Michigan state legislature, Senator Nowak told me. Nowak, a Polish-American of medium height, wavy brown hair, and twinkling blue eyes, laughed when he told of his efforts to get the state legislature to investigate the Ford job-selling racket. "Twenty-four hours after I introduced the resolution for an investigation of the racket, I was visited by one of Harry Bennett's star men, Harry Newman, the ex-football star," he said. "Newman explained that Bennett would like to see me about it."

Nowak grinned. "Of course, since Dearborn is in my senatorial district, Harry Bennett and Henry Ford are my constituents. So I told him I would be glad to get Mr. Bennett's views—in writing. But he never did write. He doesn't like to write."

ILLUSIONS ABOUT WASHINGTON

Though the union is fully aware of Ford's power in Dearborn and in the state capital, there are still illusions about Washington. Leaders of the drive were reserved about the role of Sidney Hillman and the National Defense Commission. Would Ford seek to utilize the Defense Commission against the union campaign? Director Widman pursed his lips when I asked the question and answered gravely: "Anybody who stands in the way of this drive is just going to be trampled by its sheer momentum. And I don't care who that is." Bitter resentment is shown practically everywhere against the administration for its act in presenting Ford with a $122,000,000 contract the day after election. Nowak said bluntly: "It was a blow to our organization campaign because it gave moral sanction to Ford's anti-labor practices."

It was left to Edward Levinson, Socialist, ghost writer for UAW President R. J. Thomas, to cook up an excuse for the Roosevelt administration. It wasn't the fault of the President, for whom Thomas had spoken and Levinson had written, nor was it the fault of Hillman and the Defense Commission. It was all the work of the horrid old War Department. This attempt to whitewash Roosevelt and the National Defense Commission is not, however, typical of the Ford drive and its leaders. They show no disposition to be awed by Washington into relaxing their fight for the unionization of King Henry's domain.

Concentrating on the organization campaign to the exclusion of all else, Widman has followed a policy of no discrimination in his organizing staff, only demanding results. As a consequence there are no chair-warmers. The impetus of the drive bids fair to topple the old bastion of inhuman speed-up and the open shop before many months have passed. Will the men strike as a culmination of their organizing efforts? Leaders won't say yes or no, but certainly are not pressing the question of a Labor Board election as the main issue. "When we get a majority of the Ford workers," Widman explains, "we're going to present our demands on old Henry. He's going to get just what he wants, a union agreement with a strike or a union agreement without a strike. But there's going to be collective bargaining there."

One old-timer with a gift for story-telling put it somewhat differently. The Ford drive, he said, reminded him of the story of Jones who was walking up the street when his neighbor beckoned to him from the roadway.

"Come here, Jones," said the neighbor. "Give me a hand with this horse. I want to push him up into my house."

Jones looked at his neighbor queerly but said nothing, getting behind the horse and pushing for all he was worth. When they got to the front door, the neighbor again turned to Jones. "Jonesy, old man, just be a good fellow and help me get up one floor."

Again Jones complied with the request. When they got to the first floor after considerable pushing and grunting, the neighbor turned around apologetically and said, "Jones, I hate to ask you this, but would you help me push this horse upstairs into the bathroom?" Jones did and they finally installed the horse in the bathtub. Jones mopped his brow, started to leave, and suddenly wheeled about to his neighbor.

"Now, I don't mind giving a neighbor a hand," he said, "but I must confess I'm a wee bit curious. What the hell do you want the horse in the bathtub for?"

His neighbor looked a bit sheepish. "I tell you," he began, "I got a wise-guy brother. He knows all the answers to everything. He's always there flooring me with the answer. Now, tonight I'm going to fool him. He's going to come home, go upstairs to the bathroom, and see the horse in the bathtub. Then he's gonna yell down over the bannisters to me, 'Hey, there's a horse in the bathtub.' And I'm gonna yell back, 'There is? So what?' "

The old fellow chuckled. "One day old Henry's gonna come home and find the CIO's in his bathtub and he's gonna yell, and we're gonna answer 'So what?' "

SIMON W. GERSON.

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Soviet Dawn over the Arctic

The socialist saga of how the nomad peoples of the north emerged in two decades from the most primitive economy to the aerial age. Conquest of the tundra.

"CAN you draw a locomotive?" I asked an *Evenki* of the lower Yenisei. We were in the city Soviet library in the new seaport at Igarka above the Arctic circle, some 1,200 miles north of the Trans-Siberian railway. There were big steamboats in the harbor below, but this young man, one of a hundred students in the local school for northern peoples, had never seen a railway train. The question embarrassed him. He fingered his pencil in silence, as though to focus familiar images and resolve them into a new pattern. With that aptness for pictorial art common among hunting people before they acquire a written alphabet, he could begin at the antlers and in a single line draw a perfect contour of a reindeer running with sleigh. But a locomotive! He pursed his lips and began to draw. When finished, he showed me a northern artist's conception of a locomotive—it was a side-wheel steamboat on sledge runners.

"Why the sledge runners?" I asked.

"So it can slide along," he replied.

Some people in the Soviet North are only now learning the principle of the wheel, but in reverse order. They see steamboats before they see railroad trains, airplanes before automobiles, and are familiar only with vehicles that slide overland, sail across water, or glide through the air. To them the motor car seems like a "wingless airplane," the locomotive like a "steamboat-sleigh." After seeing an automobile for the first time, one native could only describe it as a strange animal with four legs, which were "round as the moon."

In the Soviet North the dawn of the aerial age illuminates a society only now emerging from the most primitive natural economy, where the reindeer, the walrus, and the seal have been the only symbols of the earth's fertility. Bereft of warming solar rays, these people were also oblivious to the magic of heat applied in driving engine wheels and working metals. Cold forging was all they could do with metal ores. Now a belated industrial revolution envelops the frozen northland more than a century after the rise of steampower in England and a decade after the Soviet state has socialized the ownership of machines.

ENROLLED IN SCHOOLS

The release of mechanical tools to serve in the conquest of Arctic wasteland followed the social transfer of ownership. Likewise the cultural revival among the northern peoples did not precede but followed the recognition of the equality of rights for national minorities. In fact even before new industries or new forms of transportation appeared in the Arctic regions, the national renaissance was well along. Shortly after the Revolution the "Committee of the North" was organized at the initiative of Joseph Stalin, at that time Commissar for Nationalities. In 1926 the first Institute for Peoples of the North was founded in Leningrad. On sledges drawn by reindeer and dog-team, in canoes paddled up and down the summer rivers, thence by steamboat and railway train a small group of northern peoples assembled in the Leningrad school. As they enrolled for studies, they still wore the skin garments in which they had left their homes a week to four months before.

Saame from the Kola Peninsula, *Nentsi* from northeast of Archangel, *Dolgans* from the Taimyr Peninsula, *Ostyaks* from the Ob and the Yamal, *Koryaks* from Kamchatka, *Orochans* from Sakhalin, *Chukchee* from the Chukot headland opposite Alaska: all of these people originally stemmed from the race that had been cradled in the highlands of Asia. For a millennium they had retreated northward, gradually separating one from another, losing even language contact with one another. At the first grand reunion these peoples had known since before Christ, the early students found that while brothers in the new society, actually they were complete strangers. The Revolution had bridged the gulf of underprivilege. But between them stood one last barrier, the obstacle of language, the chasm of ignorance. Without a written language, they had no articulate history. Thus their study at the institute meant the dawn of history, their rise to national consciousness as a people.

Patiently they studied one year, two years, three years, under competent language teachers from whom they learned Russian, as well as general information. In turn, Soviet philologists learned from them the variant northern languages. On the basis of these spoken languages, they devised the first sixteen alphabets which were used to print the first primers for the northern people. With the assistance of these natives, words were invented for steamship, mill, mine, airplane, and similar objects for which no equivalent existed in the spoken tongue. Native newspapers began to be published in the centers of the national districts. Whole printshops with sets of type in the new alphabets were imported even before the Northern Sea Route was opened. After completing the course of study at Leningrad the natives returned to enlighten their own people.

When the first Congress of Soviets was held in the Chukot National District in 1927, forty-seven local Soviets sent delegates. They drove in on sleds drawn by dog-team and reindeer. Some were on the road for fifty days to cover the 1,500 miles to the congress and home again. Today in a week or two at most, the native *Chukchee,* who represents his people as a member of the Supreme Soviet, can fly by plane to Moscow for sessions of this elected parliament. The airplane puts him closer to Moscow than he is by surface travel to the outlying local Soviets in the Chukot National District. But for the rise of the Soviets he might never have left this region, certainly not as a highly respected representative of once isolated backwoodsmen.

A NENET. *He recently visited Moscow and shows his comrades a sculpture he bought in the capital.*

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At the time the first Congress of Soviets was held in Chukotia, elementary education had made no progress whatever. The people had no idea of a calendar year, a great handicap in scheduling the meeting. Notice had to be given months ahead, and the elders recorded the date on notched sticks. Several sticks were made, with thirty notches representing one month. As the months passed by, stick after stick was laid away. When only one stick remained, they knew it was time to hitch up the dog-teams and be off to the great assembly.

One year after the congress, teachers arrived and the *Chukchee* received their first elementary schools. Progress has been so rapid that since 1936 native Eskimos and *Chukchees* are receiving a full seven-year education. Many of them continue to attend the Institute of Northern Peoples in Leningrad and special teachers' colleges for advanced study.

WHAT SOVIETS MEAN

The rise of the Soviets heralded the awakening of national consciousness from Chukotia opposite Alaska to the Kola Peninsula opposite Finland. More than twenty small national groups numbering from 1,000 to 15,000 aboriginal peoples actually came into being along the Soviet arctic coast, the top of the Eurasian continent. They were ushered into the Union, the great assembly of free people. This expanded their political horizons beyond the petrified society of clans, which had been dominated by shaman witch doctors and families rich in reindeer. The transition was not easy. Early teachers found the people unable to comprehend the socialist state abstractly. Most of them thought the teacher was some rich man with queer philanthropic ideas. But enlightenment came in the form of concrete benefits—education, medical service, and cooperative trade. Elementary education brought them literacy. Medical service gave them humane assistance in maintaining life against great natural odds. The struggle for existence had been so severe that patricide became the custom. It had been sanctified by shaman priests to eliminate useless old men, extra mouths to feed. But now, the ignorant witch doctors lost their grip on the native mind as the advance of Soviet medicine and of cooperative trade emancipated these people from dependence on the reindeer and the hunt.

NEW LIVES

So long as the northern people remained wholly dependent on the reindeer and the hunt for their food, clothing, and shelter, they were bound by inexorable economic laws to the tundra. Here is where they were born, grew to manhood, and were buried. From the cradle to the grave they followed their reindeer to pasture along the Arctic fen in summer, to the shelter of taiga forests in winter. Children were born on the summer trek and many died before the winter camp was struck, while those who survived found little relief from the dark misery of tundra life. Under czarism Siberia remained a hinterland to be robbed of its furs and minerals. The people of the north knew only the vicious side of civilization, none of its redeeming features, and therefore retired more completely into their own clans. For centuries the nomad Asiatics had retreated north, their ranks decimated in a losing battle against stronger tribes. In straggling isolated bands they reached the frigid zone, where king famine tyrannized. They bred into a stunted race. Today, the *Chukchee,* the *Dolgan,* the *Nenets,* the Eskimo stands on the same level as the Russian, the Ukrainian, the Jew, and every other people in the Soviet Union. Medical centers are scattered all over the northern regions. Three hospitals and seven clinics have been established in the Chukot National District alone, to serve a population of about 15,000 persons. One hears no talk these days about dying races in the north. Soviet workers tell only of a rising birth-rate, of children born in maternity homes, of old men who enjoy their declining years unhaunted by the specter of premature death. Veterinarians advise on reindeer breeding. Where the herds have been collectivized, only herdsmen follow the deer from pasture to pasture. The women and children tend to settle down near the schools, the hospitals, the motion pictures, the bath-houses built at the new *kultbazes* in the north. Sea and air-borne trade brings manufactured goods, machinery, vegetables, fruits, and groceries into the trading posts, in exchange for reindeer hides, polar fox, and ermine pelts.

The wall newspaper at one of the polar stations illustrates the impact of Soviet trade in Chukotia, where there are now twenty-five trading posts. A *Chukchee* woman writes:

> I was only nineteen when given in marriage to a hired man at Nunyamo. What a wretched tent we had, barely enough room for two. It was a miserable lot we shared with little time to spare from work, work all the time, to help my husband lest we perish of hunger. I remember one fall day a foreign sealing boat arrived. We had caught many walrus. The fur-traders told my husband to skin walrus hides. He worked a long time and so hard his whole face swelled up. For this he got one dollar, enough to buy a half case of bullets and two pounds of sugar. My man had no gun. He hunted with traps. How happy we were one time when he trapped five white fox. But what good was it? He exchanged all for a rifle and some bullets. Many times *Chukchee* got nothing. The furs were simply taken from them. My whole life seemed like a bad dream.
>
> Only when the Soviets arose did it become different. In 1929 a cooperative store was opened and the *kultbaz* was built. I sent all my children to school. I was overjoyed to see the youngsters come back home in new clothes and in the pink of health. For his fur catch my man began to get a lot of money and many bullets. In 1932 we spent our earnings to build ourselves a new tent home and began to live in real comfort. Our whole family has joined the hunters' collective. I have two grown sons. Life is no longer a dream but is joyous reality. Many times I repeat my thanks to Comrade Stalin for our happiness.

This is the view of a native woman writing in a local *Chukchee*-language newspaper, itself an evidence of cultural advance, and with no idea that her words had more than local significance. Similar statements could be quoted from other districts of the Soviet Arctic, where cooperative trade is an economic basis for cultural advance and the insurance against famine, that periodic curse of hunting peoples. In some areas where new industries are rising the northern natives are abandoning the reindeer trek to engage in industrial work as truck drivers, mechanics, and mill hands.

One might still find a few people in the Soviet North with hazy ideas about what a locomotive looks like. But there is almost none who has never seen an airplane. Many natives themselves are learning how to fly. In the Chukot National District seven young natives have become pilots by studying at the local flying school. After a period of advanced training at the Civil Air Fleet flying school in Moscow, they will in 1941 become the first native flyers to serve on the regular airlines in northern Siberia. This demonstrates the completeness with which these people—who a generation ago knew only how to hunt, fish, and herd reindeer, who could not even count above ten, who were ignorant of all but superstitions about nature—have now mastered one of the most difficult of modern transport arts. Socialism now puts airplanes into their hands. And they fly into the sun of a new age.

A. J. STEIGER.

Employers as Draft Dodgers

A FORM of draft-dodging by employers is revealed in the Workers Alliance publication, *Work,* for November 1940. The paper reports that "a general policy of not hiring or rehiring men of draft age" has been adopted by Dayton, O., manufacturers, according to local representatives of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, CIO. "Companies which admit the practice," says *Work,* "say frankly that they are not interested in training workers who may be drafted in a short time. They prefer boys of eighteen or nineteen who offer the additional advantage of working for lower wages."

Profits on Wings

AIRPLANES can hardly go up any faster than the profits of the aircraft companies under the favors of a war administration. According to the Federal Trade Commission, important plane manufacturers showed an average profit rate of 34.4 percent on their invested capital in 1939, as against 24.2 percent in 1938. One company, unnamed, reported 98.8 percent profit last year. For 1940, of course, the take will be much greater, with a booming bomber program getting under way. The FTC also reported that foreign orders accounted for 63 percent of the business of seven airplane companies during 1939. The wage level in the aircraft industry, which is not yet unionized, is well below that of the auto industry.

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Fascism: Oklahoma Brand

The state whose dirty politics and private armies sentenced Robert Wood to ten years' imprisonment now tries Alan Shaw.

1940. Oklahoma City, Okla. f oil-well kings and America's Hooverville. County-seat where teachers and public employees are asked to work several weeks each year without pay.

In the derrick-shadowed governor's mansion lives Leon Phillips, the man of the oil and utility companies. He it is who pared the budget for relief and education, who called out the militia to prevent completion of the Grand River Dam, who flew to Washington to stop the Cole bill which would have regulated the oil companies, and who shelved the state Wage-Hour law by vetoing the appropriation for its administration. He it is, too, who sent out the militia and an investigator when bombings of pipelines occurred during an oil strike, and who fired the investigator when he reported that the company was apparently bombing its own lines.

The county sheriff's seat, in the high white building recently erected by PWA labor, is occupied by Commander-in-chief George Goff, head of a private extra-legal army, the Oklahoma County "Civil Guard," known to number some 4,000 men.

In the city hall, W. A. Quinn holds office as city manager. Here, too, is the office of the Oklahoma City Emergency Defense Battalion, organized by the city manager, with Sam Sullivan, protege of "Red" Phillips, as its nominal head. It has never been quite clear what "emergency" the battalion was designed to meet. The Investigations Bureau, headed by policeman Dan Hollingsworth, the chief witness in the recent trial of Robert Wood, State Secretary of the Communist Party, is part of this extra-legal Defense Battalion.

On Robinson and 7th Street, red neon lights blaze the name of Dr. E. F. Webber. This is the fanatical "Father" Webber, radio preacher, whose diatribes against Communism and labor are broadcast daily over the air from a favorite local station, and who, in June of this year, did hold in the stadium of his tabernacle a public bookburning of Communist literature. Two days prior to the announcement of this gala affair, a gang of hoodlums stole a quantity of books from the Progressive Bookstore run by Robert Wood. Four months later Wood was sentenced by an Oklahoma County jury to ten years and a $5,000 fine because certain literature was in that store.

THE ACCUSED

Here comes to trial young Alan Shaw, Oklahoma City Secretary of the Communist Party, who several days ago spent his twenty-second birthday in the Oklahoma County jail, where he has been held since August with bond set at $20,000. Shaw is well known in the city. As the City Secretary of the Communist Party, he has spoken often before the city council in behalf of the city's unemployed. He has spoken at meetings of the Social Welfare Conference, asking for a program of jobs and relief. He has spoken in behalf of the young people, in behalf of the Oklahoma Negroes. He has spoken for peace. Shaw is not accused of murder, he is not accused of theft. He is accused of being what everyone has always known he was—a member of the Communist Party of Oklahoma.

Serious, but giving a friendly smile to one or another of the spectators whom he recognizes, he appears in the courtroom, clad in the faded blue cotton slacks and boyish polo shirt in which he was hauled off to jail one Saturday afternoon last August.

Here, wearing a brown suit, comes the thick-set middle-aged Legionnaire, County Attorney Lewis R. Morris. A wary man. An ambitious man. At first, he washed his hands of the criminal syndicalism suits filed by his assistant. Then he saw an opportunity. In 1942, another man must move into the governor's mansion behind the domeless oil capital. Who knows who that will be? So he stepped into the Wood case to make the closing summation to the jury. He called Robert Wood a "Judas Iscariot paid with thirty pieces of silver from the Soviet Union in Moscow." This is the high-sounding, false simile, irrelevant, unsubstantiated by any scrap of evidence, that is credited with the ten-year sentence meted out to Robert Wood. But the jury, faced with thousands of pages to read and weigh, deliberated some fifty minutes. Morris had called Wood "Judas Iscariot," and Wood was sentenced to ten years in the penitentiary. Morris is credited with this achievement. Governor Phillips has patted him on the back.

For since the Wood conviction, County Attorney Morris has been speaking at dinners throughout the state. Is he going to move into the mansion that Phillips has to vacate? The story goes that his hopes are high. And if Morris moves into the mansion, someone else can move into the county attorney's seat. That's where John Eberle comes in.

Short, pugnacious, pugnosed John Eberle, Assistant County Attorney of Oklahoma County, is said to be the initiator of the prosecution of the Oklahoma City Communists. It is he who broke the glass top on the courtroom table at the preliminary hearing, while he shouted in one breath that "nobody knows anything about them, who they are or where they came from and if we allowed them to get out on bail we'd never see any of them again," that Oklahoma was being invaded by "foreigners from Brooklyn and the Bronx." It is Eberle who admitted that he had no evidence that the defendants had ever advocated the use of violence for any purpose, but who did himself, as was sworn to before the Dies committee by a special city investigator, threaten and plan to use violence against these same defendants and those who chose to listen to them—until he dug up the dusty forgotten state criminal syndicalism law.

And may Eberle not see in these trials his chance to fill the chair that Morris hopes to rise from?

CHANGE OF VENUE DENIED

The counsel for the defense begins to read: "Comes now the defendant, Alan Shaw, and petitions the court to grant a change of venue, because of the fact that the defendant cannot have a fair and impartial trial in Oklahoma County, due to the bias and prejudice of the citizens of Oklahoma County. . . ."

The petition tells how, on August 17, seventeen or eighteen men and women were arrested in Oklahoma County; how they were held for days incommunicado without any charge being filed against them; how bail was finally set as high as $100,000 per person.

It lists the attempts of the prosecuting attorneys to arouse bias and prejudice, statements made by Phillips, Quinn, Goff, Morris in an attempt to stifle the growing local protest against the prosecutions, and tells how County Attorney Morris announced that he was turning all letters of protest over to the FBI.

It tells how the seventeen-year-old son of two of the defendants, taken to jail with his parents and a week later released, was met on his way home and beaten up by a gang of boys.

And then appear, subpenaed by the defense, "Father" E. F. Webber boasting of his sermons and his bookburnings. . . .

County Sheriff-Commander-in-chief George Goff, testifying that he had reasons for asking his 4,000 members to list all "usable firearms in their possession"—refusing to testify and being supported by the court. . . .

And City Manager-Commander-in-chief Quinn, with his first lieutenant, the governor's protege, Sam Sullivan—on the city payroll as a "statistician"—who estimate that their army, the Emergency Defense Battalion, now numbers 2,700 men.

Commander-in-chief Goff admits that he has publicly lauded the jury that sentenced Robert Wood to ten years in the penitentiary for selling books. Then, he swears under oath that he has no prejudice against the defendant because he is a Communist.

So swears City Manager Quinn of the "Defense Battalion." So swears the governor's man, Sam Sullivan. So swear members of the Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce—Johnson, whose law firm was recently paid $50,000 for emasculating the Wage-Hour law, Kylie, the manager of the Gas and Electric Co.

And the court rules: "If the defense counsel don't think they can get a fair and impartial trial in Oklahoma County, you will just have to pull your belts in. Petition for change of venue denied."

Now sits on trial Alan Shaw.

ELIZABETH Z. GREEN.

Alan Shaw, since Miss Green completed her article, has been released from jail in $7,500 bail. However, he is still on trial.—The Editors.

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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One Year After

HISTORY these days moves so swiftly that already the Soviet-Finnish war seems as remote in time as it was in space. Yet November 30 marked only one year since the Red Army began the operations which frustrated what had been planned as the second war of intervention against the Soviet Union. In the year that has passed many mouth-filling words that were uttered in behalf of Baron Mannerheim and his fellow-"democrats" have revealed themselves as pitifully hollow and thin. That is why the New York *Times'* anniversary editorial in which it described the Soviet campaign as "the most brutal and cynical assault ever made up to that time against the liberties of a free people" sounds curiously anachronistic and even more nonsensical than its similar canards during the course of the war. For many who were misled by the propaganda of the press, and the Roosevelt administration, now recognize the truth which NEW MASSES emphasized week after week: that behind "little Finland" stood rather big bosses.

One can appreciate the *Times'* sense of delicacy in not mentioning the fact that on the day the Soviet-Finnish peace was signed, the gentlemen who only a few weeks later betrayed France to Hitler boasted that an army of 50,000 men to aid the Finnish white guards had been ready for embarkation, and that large quantities of munitions had been shipped from France to Finland. Nor would it be seemly to remind people at this time of the lofty plans of the Allies for "switching the war." The Soviet peace terms, probably the most generous ever offered by a victorious government, helped open the eyes of many. And the peace also marked the beginning of a process of disillusionment with their government which has spread rapidly among the masses of Finland. Today, the largest organization in Finland is the Society of Friendship and Peace with the USSR, despite the fact that it is semi-legal, is constantly harassed by the government, and its chairman, Dr. Ryomi, is in jail. Within the Social-Democratic Party, whose leaders became the chief organizers of the anti-Soviet war, there is also ferment. The former secretary of the party has become head of a powerful left wing which is demanding a break with reaction and a policy of friendship with the Soviet Union. Finland's growing economic crisis, an aftermath of the war, is accentuating the class struggle and undermining the position of the ruling class which is now busily seeking a new master in Nazi Berlin.

NEW MASSES is proud of the role it played in illuminating the issues of the Soviet-Finnish conflict. The capitalist press and the pathetic "liberal" journals who trailed in its wake thoroughly discredited themselves by their reporting of the war. As for the Roosevelt administration, it has not to this day removed the moral embargo which it imposed on the basis of fabricated stories that Soviet planes were bombing civilians. And under the mask of friendship, Roosevelt and Sumner Welles continue to sabotage that collaboration with the Soviet Union which can assure peace in the Far East and the victory of China over the Japanese invaders.

Whither Italy?

ALMOST interesting discussion has developed over Italy's future. The Department of Agriculture last week published a detailed report on Italy's food situation and its raw material reserve, both of which were considered critical. There is considerable speculation that Mussolini faces a crisis in his regime, although it is difficult to see who could replace him after Marshal Balbo's death last summer. Some bets are placed on Prince Humberto, King Victor Emmanuel's son; a more bizarre hunch is that Italy might switch sides as it did in 1915. This would be embarrassing to the ideologists of a war for democracy, we should think, except that we remember the flirtation with Musso until June 10, nor can we overlook the shameful appeasement of Franco and the delicate intrigue with Marshal Petain that's going on right now.

The likeliest possibility is that Germany will be compelled to help her limping partner along. German troops are reported to have been assigned to key Italian cities in the north Italian plain for over a year now; more of them might be necessary to keep things in hand. What Hitler intends to do about Greece is still unclear: help to Mussolini would be a deep moral blow at the Axis even if camouflaged as an expression of the "unbreakable unity of their will."

The British Navy is clearly trying to knock Italy out of the Mediterranean, with some modest success thus far. But just what would the Tories do with Italy if they defeated her? What in fact could the Italian people expect from any outcome to this war except through their revolutionary self-assertion? In fact, NEW MASSES learns that this seemed to worry the State Department considerably last week, where officials were reported as very impressed by the story that Italian prisoners in Athens were singing *"Bandera Rossa,"* the Italian revolutionary anthem. However that may be, one thing is clear: that while it may take time before the facade of Mussolini's empire crumbles, the Mussolini myth has already been destroyed.

Rumania

IF EVERYTHING that is allegedly happening in Rumania be true—the assassination of some 100 former dignitaries, among them a former premier and some cabinet ministers, the widespread atrocities against the Jews, the macabre ceremonies over the disinterred body of Corneliu Codreanu, the reported suicides of some thirty terrorists—then certainly the whole fabric of Rumanian society is visibly decomposing. General Antonescu, who took over control after King Carol and his cronies fled in September, now seems to have the situation in hand, but for a while the terror seemed to have been directed against King Michael and Antonescu himself. It is of some significance that the general was compelled to pledge the eventual restoration of Transylvania to Rumania, which not only troubles Budapest, but throws a shaft of light on the permanence of Germany's "new order" in Europe. All this is evidently only a superficial manifestation of much deeper disorders: the disruption of economic life after the recent earthquakes, the misery of the peasants, the uncertainty about the future of the war, all of which combine to make Rumania one of the most unstable areas in the Danubian valley. If it is true that Germany is now compelled to ship more soldiers into the key cities and oil fields, this would hardly express a strengthening of the total German position in the Balkans.

"Revolt" Made to Order

IT IS perhaps unnecessary to enlighten NEW MASSES readers on the reported revolt in Bessarabia. It was a "revolt" which the New York *Times* dignified with a leading front-page headline, but which was promptly forgotten next morning. Evidently, the American press still adheres to the slander that "Communism and fascism are the same thing" so doggedly that it could not resist the opportunity of throwing some mud on the USSR: what with anarchy in German-controlled Rumania, it was simply necessary to invent a corresponding anarchy in the Soviet Moldavian republic of which Bessarabia is now a part! Even a revolt which lasts in the pages of the press for a few hours, of which no facts are given, and which disappears over night still serves its purpose. Such is the integrity of American capitalist journalism.

Behind the Loan

SERIOUS friends of China will raise their eyebrows at the latest move of American diplomacy, the grant of the hundred million dollar loan. The first questions which arise are whether Mr. Roosevelt is really helping China to full victory, or whether the loan is simply intended to keep Japan "bogged down," to scare her off from the Dutch East Indies, to soften the Japanese up for some reasonable bargain with American imperialism. Secondly, is this a loan with no strings attached? or is Washington expecting something in return for its dollars, for example, increased friction within China's united front? Such questions

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become even more pertinent when the loan itself is analyzed. The United States gets strategic minerals for the armament program, but will China's soldiers get arms, munitions, and airplanes in return? Then again, few Americans realize what support for China's currency means. Basically, such support helps only a small section of China—her banking and commercial community. In fact, *some of this fifty million dollars will actually reach Japan,* since in the main coastal cities under their control, the Japanese are themselves speculating in Chinese dollars.

Incidentally, it is of some significance that the Administration draws upon its two-billion-dollar Stabilization Fund to support Chinese currency. This fund, it will be remembered, was created by the devaluation of the dollar, and was originally intended for joint currency control among Britain, France, and the United States. Together with the Export-Import Bank, Mr. Roosevelt now has still another device for extra-Congressional subsidies of his foreign policy. The use of this fund marks a precedent for similar manipulations in connection with loans to Britain.

The American move is, of course, a reflex to Japan's recognition of the Wang Ching-wei traitor outfit. Evidently, Tokyo has given up hope, at least for the present, of bringing Chungking to its terms. That Chungking is standing firm against Japan is a good sign, but the American loan would be a cause for genuine rejoicing if it were accompanied by a full embargo against all Japanese purchases in this country plus a real understanding with the Soviet Union. Let's remember that for every dollar China gets, Japan is getting more than one in American goods. Until this situation ceases, and until Sumner Welles stops his shadowplay with Japan in the form of the transparent "discussions" with the Soviet ambassador, Constantine Oumansky, there is cause for continued alarm.

Tragedy in Palestine

EARLY in November the steamships *Pacific* and *Milos* brought 1,771 Jewish refugees from Nazi rule to the port of Haifa, Palestine. After months of wandering, they had finally arrived at what they thought was the Jewish national homeland. But Churchill proved no more hospitable than Hitler. The real master of the "homeland," British imperialism, had barred all Jewish immigration; the refugees were not permitted to land. Committees of Palestine Jews pleaded with the British officials; workers and small business men organized protest strikes, but to no avail. The British authorities ordered the refugees sent to an unnamed penal colony in the Indian Ocean for the duration of the war. The nearly 2,000 men, women, and children were transferred to the steamship *Patria.* Before the ship could get under way, there was an explosion. Twenty-two refugees were killed, many more were missing.

A horrible tragedy—and crime. But the reactionary Jewish press in this country and Zionist leaders immediately devoted themselves to covering up the criminal, British imperialism. The Social-Democratic *Jewish Daily Forward* at first denied that anyone had been killed. The New York *Post,* owned by George Backer, himself a Jew and one of the right-wing leaders of the American Labor Party, wrote that the Nazis "planted two hundred Gestapo agents" among the refugees. In the midst of this the New York *Times* of November 28 published a dispatch from Jerusalem. The headline: "Palestine Welcomes High Polish Refugees." Who were these "refugees"? According to the *Times,* "The Poles were five hundred nobles, statesmen and former war leaders. . . ."

There you have the real portrait of British imperialism and its war of "liberation."

Mr. Gompers' Ghost

LABOR moved backward at the AFL convention. Or, to be more precise, labor was thrust backward by gentlemen who have been doing that sort of thing for years. Barbara Giles gave our readers a glimpse of the first week of the convention in her report from New Orleans in last week's issue. The concluding week was the same, only worse. Its most important event occurred outside the convention sessions: Bill Green's *ex cathedra* announcement to the press that no strike "for any reason" should be permitted to halt production on war materials for the United States and Britain. Green did not even bother to ask the convention to ratify his offer to straitjacket the workers in advance of war.

The entire convention was, in fact, permeated with the war spirit. Quietly jettisoned was the policy adopted at the 1939 convention: "We are unalterably opposed to our nation becoming involved in European conflicts. We favor the exercise of neighborly and mediatorial influence by our government in all efforts to promote peace and compose differences among nations." This "unalterable" opposition to war had in one year been transformed into opposition to peace. The aid-to-Britain note dominated, and the Roosevelt administration was given *carte blanche* to lead the country to a new 1917, with Green a more sycophantic edition of Gompers.

On the subject of racketeering the convention proved coy. It adopted a strong resolution in favor of virtue and against sin. Since some of the nation's most distinguished labor racketeers sit on the AFL executive council, this was to have been expected. The peculiar paralysis that seizes the council when asked to clean out underworld mobsters who seize control of unions, is in contrast with the exceptional energy shown some years ago in purging Communists or more recently in expelling CIO unions. David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, who crawled back into the AFL on the promise that something would be done about racketeering, hid his discomfiture by denouncing John L. Lewis, who had contemptuously likened him to Rachel lamenting in the wilderness.

There were, of course, positive notes struck too, such as the attack on Thurman Arnold's union-busting anti-trust prosecutions, the criticisms of the Wage-Hour Adminstration, the upholding of the principle of the thirty-hour week, the endorsement of anti-poll tax and anti-lynching legislation, and the demand that government contracts be barred to NLRA violators. But these were largely verbal gestures to placate the rank and file. In practice the whole policy of the AFL leadership tends to encourage further aggression by the employers and the government on labor's hard-won gains.

The AFL membership finds it difficult to be heard at conventions because of the undemocratic method of representation. But the needs of this membership are in essence no different from those of the CIO workers. The resolutions and the legislative program adopted at the recent CIO convention constitute therefore a program for the entire American working class. It is the struggle to achieve this program and to bring unionism to those as yet unorganized that can unite the labor movement.

Vultee Victory

MORE than in any strike of recent months, the victory of 3,700 workers at the Vultee Aircraft Corporation's Downey plant was a defeat for Red-baiting. Both Attorney General Jackson and Congressman Martin Dies concentrated their talents for smearing progressive labor, upon the Vultee strikers. Indeed the Jackson-Dies colloquy on who saw the greatest number of Reds on the picketline was a rich example of how little either of these gentlemen cares for the living standards of workers. The issue was solely the wage and hour scale at Vultee; the workers won large gains, a new minimum hourly scale of 62½ cents against the 50-cent previous minimum; reclassification and increased pay in several categories as high as 90 cents an hour; a 40-hour, 5-day week with two weeks' vacation with pay.

There is no "no-strike" clause in the contract. Instead grievance arbitration machinery has been set up, similar to that established by the organized Chrysler workers. Apprentice pay has also been raised. Indeed, the workers at Vultee have reason to be proud of their achievement in blazing the way toward decent wage and hour standards in war production.

Leaders of the Vultee strike are veteran UAW-CIO organizers who have never been Communists. The Communist Party, however, in consonance with its general policy, supported the workers' justifiable demands. Messrs. Jackson and Dies used an old, outworn strike-breaking tactic when they cried: "There's Soviet gold in them thar picketlines!" The tactic failed.

Mr. Dies' Egg

AN UNUSUALLY large egg was laid last week by none other than Jack Garner's poll tax congressman from Texas, the Hon. Martin Dies. For several years Mr. Dies has

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been tooting horns and thumping drums with fierce warnings against the sabotage and spying activities of the Reds. Mr. Dies said that his disclosures would shake America.

The disclosures actually did shake America —with laughter. Even the anti-Communist New York *Daily News* called the 980-page Dies Red Book a dud. Martin and his stool pigeons, renegades, and professional ferrets had spent good American money to republish the Communist Manifesto of 1848 and excerpts from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin as well as literature by American Communists—all bravely and boldly obtained by visiting the nearest Workers Book Shop. Not one single line or word mentions sabotage or spying for the reason that no Communist sabotage or spying exists. Marxist literature cribbed from standard volumes is available in many public libraries; passages were republished out of context in an effort to prove the unprovable.

What Mr. Dies did show, although negatively, was that the Communist Party opposes war. Naturally he omitted authorized Communist disavowals of sabotage and the advocacy of violence as a means of effecting change. Dies also showed that his methods are too clumsy and crude for the subtler Mr. Roosevelt, who summoned him to the White House to chide him and ask his indulgence while the FBI does the real job of hog-tying the progressive and trade union movement.

Initiating the Draftees

A DRESS rehearsal of the draft was staged last week as 18,700 trainees, 90 percent of whom were volunteers, were called to the colors. Of this number, nearly 25 percent were rejected later by army doctors because of defective vision, bad teeth or other ailments, an index to the lowered health standards of the nation due to economic depression. This "token quota" reported to the fanfare of brass bands, speeches by public officials, and a grand propaganda campaign which sought to prove that camp food is delicious and that camp life is one eternal round of dances with society belles, movies, shows, games, and general high jinks.

The failure to fill the first fractional draft quota indicates that the Army is unprepared to absorb the 769,300 young men who must be called up before next June 30. Accommodations are woefully unsuited to early winter weather; Fort Dix recruits arrived in a sleet storm, plodded over muddy soil to "winterized" field tents. The propaganda indicates that the administration is seeking to overcome the apathy and resentment of the general public, expressed by the remarkable resignation of 314 civilian draft board officials in the city of New York alone. Announcement has been made that no new quotas will be called until after the holidays.

Resentment has been highest among Negroes, who report to the Army to find that they are being Jim Crowed from reveille to taps—in special companies, segregated socially at theaters, post exchanges, mess halls, and at work. Not even the "delicious roast veal" found by *PM's* food expert at Fort Dix can salve the feelings of thirty Negro recruits who walked out of the camp theater in a body when they were told to sit apart from their white comrades.

Blackjacking the Teachers

FREEDOM of education is meeting a sinister attack this week in New York City where the Rapp-Coudert committee, authorized by the state legislature to investigate state-sponsored educational institutions, is off on a typical Dies Red-baiting jamboree. Blacklists of members of Teachers Union, Local 5, and College Teachers Union, Local 537, are sought. Because he refused to submit such a list Pres. Charles J. Hendley of Local 5 faces jail for "contempt" of the committee. Seven professors of Brooklyn and City College have also signified their intention of refusing to testify until the committee limits itself to its legal authority.

The hearings began with a long and typical fictitious narrative of Communist activities in Brooklyn College by Prof. Bernard Grebanier, in the course of which union attorney William G. Mulligan was forcibly ejected when he asked permission to represent Local 5. No interest in education as such, nor in school conditions in New York, was exhibited by the committee which is lavishly represented by high-priced lawyers.

The two progressive teachers' locals and the American Federation of Teachers are opposing the heresy hunt vigorously, insisting that the committee has no legal power under the enabling resolution to probe into political opinions. The attack on the teachers is preposterous. It is a simple outrage which no serious friend of education can afford to let go unchallenged.

Mike Gold on the Renegades

CONGRATULATIONS to our old friend, contributor, and former editor, Mike Gold, on his illuminating series of articles in the *Daily Worker* dealing with the great tradition and the literary renegades. These articles are making literary history. In his characteristically pungent style, Mike Gold dissects the history and motives of those intellectuals who are hopping on the bandwagon of war and reaction. At the same time, he is articulating the deepest convictions of progressive intellectuals who are determined to preserve culture by working for peace and the extension of political and economic democracy in the direction of socialism. For two decades Mike Gold has been the leading critic of obscurantism, escapism, and deceit in literature. His present series of articles, a mighty challenge to the forces that seek to undermine progressive culture, will bring renewed understanding and confidence to the many thousands of Americans whom he has inspired by his courage, integrity, and unwavering devotion to the working class.

The *Daily Worker* is performing an important service to American literature by publishing this series.

Death and Taxes

PRESIDENT Roosevelt is preparing to present another post-election bill to the American people. He has announced that all expenditures except those for armaments would be "cut to the bone." The whole discussion of the budget reads like a pronouncement of the National Economy League and has aroused great satisfaction in big business circles. The administration is considering, according to the press, a double budget system under which expenditures for regular functions and those for the increased arms program would be separated. It is planned that the regular budget, which would include the "normal" appropriations for the army and navy, would be balanced in the next fiscal year. This would be done by drastic reduction of relief and other social expenditures, plus increased taxation.

It is well to consider what this implies. Throughout the period when the New Deal expressed to a limited extent the needs of the majority of the people, the reactionaries who clamored for balancing the budget insisted that they did not expect this to be possible at one swoop. Now, if the press reports are correct, FDR proposes to go beyond even what the most extreme budget-slashers have demanded.

The tax plans are hardly more encouraging. According to the New York *Times* of November 21 proposals now under consideration involve further broadening of the income tax base—which means that additional hundreds of thousands of low-income Americans will have to pay taxes—and increased levies on articles of consumption such as tobacco and alcoholic beverages. A measure passed last June already increased by one billion dollars, taxes on small incomes and on consumption; what is promised is more of the same.

There is, of course, also talk of tightening the gift tax provisions in the present law, but this will not tap the most important sources of wealth and will not greatly increase revenue from this tax. The fraudulent excess profits tax recently passed shows that there is no disposition in administration quarters to interfere with the bonanza flow of profits to the large corporations.

What about Roosevelt's election pledges to continue and strengthen the reforms of the recent period? They are as the snows of yesteryear. Guns have supplanted butter on the Roosevelt menu. But will the people swallow that kind of fare?

The Difference

IN 1930 Charles G. Johnson of California, registering as a voter, claimed he was born in Sweden. In 1932, again registering, he gave his birthplace as California. No charges of "falsification" were brought against Mr. Johnson. But Samuel Adams Darcy, who made an error as to his birthplace when registering in 1934, has been extradited from Pennsylvania to California to face a possible prison term of fourteen years. Mr. Darcy is Communist Party secretary for eastern Pennsylvania. Mr. Johnson is Republican Party treasurer for California.

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Readers' Forum

Appreciation

TO NEW MASSES: You have done a service in calling public attention to the "blueprint for the conscription of labor in the United States," and in insisting that the administration either repudiate or affirm this revealing document. This is the logical and factual filling in of the M Day plan, which has never been fully revealed even in Congress.

Both labor and the rest of us will now lose our democratic rights if the administration is not compelled by the pressure of a great popular demand to state clearly its aims and program in relation to the war. At present the American people are being sold a pig in a poke by scare stories and moral phrases like "saving civilization" and "sacrifices by labor." They got peacetime conscription without knowing what was happening, and they will get labor conscription after it if they do not wake up and resist in time.

HARRY F. WARD.

New York City.

And Ditto

TO NEW MASSES: Congratulations on your expose of the Roosevelt administration's plans for herding us working stiffs into forced labor. The bright boys of the Department of Justice don't seem to have missed a single Hitler trick. Maybe it ought to make my flesh creep, but what it really does is make my blood boil. The fact is I came close to voting for Roosevelt on November 5, even though I hadn't much faith in him. I guess I was influenced by the endorsement the UAW executive board gave him. But after thinking it over, I shifted to Browder, and I'm damn glad I did. How many votes do you think Roosevelt would have gotten if people had known they were voting for forced labor for themselves? Henry Ford is bad enough in Detroit without making Fordism the law of the land. But maybe the Department of Justice crowd are counting their chickens before they're hatched. More power to you.

L. F. S.

Detroit.

Question and Answer

TO NEW MASSES: Like all native-born Americans (we were here before the Roosevelts) who understand, appreciate, and glory in the history of their country, I am a confirmed revolutionary. By that I mean that I am an exponent of constant change, always in the hope that the change will be for the better. That is why I read the NEW MASSES. I like to get all sides of all important questions.

However, I think you are carrying the revolutionary idea a little too far when you write in your issue of November 19: ". . . the British face the decimation of their merchant fleet by more than a third in the next year." Will you be good enough to tell me how anything can be decimated by one-third? I await your reply anxiously because if you are right, I must learn my arithmetic all over again and I never was very good at it anyhow.

Seriously, your story about Mrs. Latham's dilemma was wonderful. Although Congressman Dies persists in ignoring the subject, it is pretty evident that the most destructive fifth column in this country is composed of the Anglophiles. One does not have to be especially learned to know that the British are the natural and inevitable competitors of America. This was proved by their antics following Versailles when they teamed up with the Germans, and I could quote item after item which establishes these points. So I suggest to your editors that you give the British more attention.

It is also my opinion that we are in far greater danger of war with Britain than we are with Germany for the very simple reason that our interests clash at so many vital points. I am afraid those fifty destroyers and flying fortresses will come back to us but not in a manner which we shall approve.

I cannot approve of Hitler's activities. I know too little about Russia to have formed an opinion which would be worth anything, but I do have a deep and abiding respect for America and American ideals regardless of how often they are perverted in practice. So I say, *"Delenda est Britannia,"* and if this be treason, let J. Edgar Hoover make the most of it.

MATTHEW HORN.

Stamford, Conn.

[Our correspondent is quite right about the word "decimation." Literally, it means to take the tenth part of. Another definition of Webster's states "to destroy a large part of." However, let's say then, that the British merchant fleet faces decimation by three-tenths in the next year. We think we are giving the British a great deal of attention, but we remind our reader that we would like to see the destruction of *both* British and German imperialism. Without this mutual defeat, neither the peoples of Central Europe, the British Isles, nor the great nations of the colonial world will achieve permanent peace. We cannot agree that at present the United States faces war with Britain. Big business interests of both countries, despite deep-going differences, have set themselves the task of annihilating their German competitors. In the meantime it is interesting to note how our own Lords of Creation are undermining the strategic and commercial positions of their British rivals in the very clever form of "aid to Britain."—THE EDITORS.]

Nehru's Arrest

TO NEW MASSES: I share your indignation at the arrest and now the imprisonment of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian leader. Four years in prison is a hard sentence for a man past fifty. If such treatment is meted out to such an outstanding man, British rule in India must be becoming more shaky every day. I was amazed at the editorial comment of the New York *Times,* which insisted on November 10 that Mr. Nehru had gotten his just deserts. The *Times* blames the continuation of British rule upon the Indian people themselves and offers the excuse we have heard so often that religious differences between Moslems and Hindus make freedom dangerous for India. This is hypocritical because the British power has itself fostered these differences. Moreover, this is certainly no justification for Mr. Nehru's arrest for he has been an ardent champion of Hindu-Moslem unity. The editors of the *Times* must know that a Moslem, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, was elected chairman of the All-India National Congress last spring.

As a person who reads both your magazine and the *Nation* I was amazed at the latter's editorial comment in their issue of November 9. After deploring Nehru's arrest the *Nation* observes that it "will serve a useful purpose if it helps to awaken Britain to the perennial folly of its Indian policy." I wonder whom the *Nation* means by "Britain"? Do the British people have to be awakened to British policy in India? and if so would the *Nation* support such an awakening? Does the *Nation* think that Mr. Churchill is walking in his sleep when he orders Nehru imprisoned? I thought we had learned from the history of the past seven years that British policy is not a blunder or a muddle: it is a *deliberate calculation,* especially in India. Instead of becomng indignant against Nehru's incarceraton, the *Nation* editors heave a sigh for British folly. Perhaps, after all, Nehru's arrest "will serve a useful purpose if it awakens" *Nation* readers "to the perennial folly of Miss Kirchwey's apology for British imperialism."

ROBERT V. SMILEY.

St. Louis, Mo.

Generous Mrs. FDR

TO NEW MASSES: I see where Eleanor Roosevelt is stringing right along with the other neo-fascists who have taken over the New Deal. In a speech at Springfield, Ill., she said: "Do not be afraid to give up the rights of a free people if giving up means we are to preserve our way of life, because as a free people we can always get them back again whenever we want them."

Just let's see how this works out. First we give up our way of life in order to preserve our way of life. Then since we are a free people, though we have given up our freedom, we can always get back again the rights which we never lost. Simple, isn't it? *We* can always get them back. Those poor German people, being dopes, can't get their rights back, but *we* can "whenever we want them." Well, Eleanor, we want them now, and tomorrow and forever. Barbara Giles did such a good job with Dorothy Thompson in NM several months ago. What about something on our so kind and liberal and humanitarian Eleanor?

FRANK RILEY.

New York.

Never Too Late

TO NEW MASSES: I am sending you a copy of a letter which was received by Earl Browder, Communist candidate for President, and turned over to the National Election Campaign Committee of the Communist Party. This may be a little late, but I am sure your readers will be interested.

ALEXANDER TRACHTENBERG.

"Regardless of the election results, you made a campaign that for courage and honest speaking is outstanding in American history—and this under stress of so much official obstruction and stupid personal attack. I take off my hat to you.

Sincerely,

ART YOUNG."

New York City.

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The New New World

Corliss Lamont reviews the Dean of Canterbury's study of the USSR. A fascinating picture of the cultural and spiritual horizons toward which the Soviet people are driving.

THE SOVIET POWER, *by Hewlett Johnson. Modern Age Books. $2.50. Paper bound edition for "Soviet Russia Today," $1.*

IN ADDITION to the unceasing flow of good books on the many different aspects of Soviet life, there appears every so often a volume that completely synthesizes and summarizes the whole vast dynamic and developing scene of action that is the Soviet Union. Such a volume was *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization,* by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, published in 1935, and *The Soviets,* by Albert Rhys Williams, published in 1937. And such a work, too, is this rich and exciting book, *The Soviet Power,* by Hewlett Johnson, one of the three or four top-ranking English prelates and Dean of venerable Canterbury Cathedral in the heart of bomb-torn southeastern England.

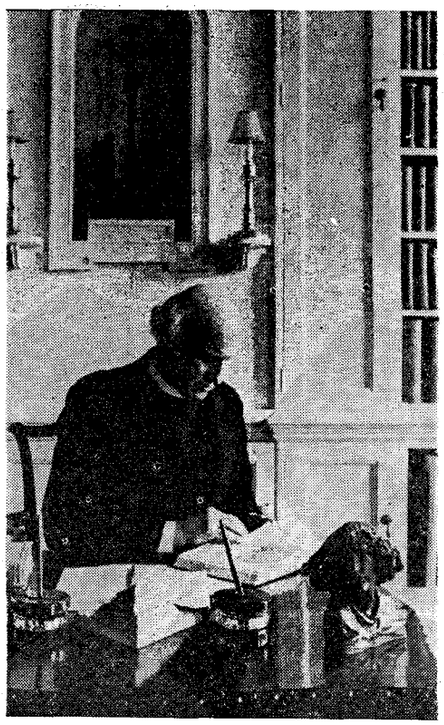
Dean Johnson introduces his fascinating study of the USSR with a short autobiographical sketch and a searching analysis into the failures of the capitalist system. Brought up in a well-to-do bourgeois family of nine children and passing his youth and early manhood near the great industrial city of Manchester, the author continuously saw at first-hand the poverty and suffering and heroism of a working class chained all too closely to the uncontrollable ups and downs of a declining capitalism. He concentrated in science and engineering at the University of Manchester, taking a degree in science before he was twenty-one; and later, in line with his ambition of becoming a missionary engineer, studied theology for four years at Oxford. But for one reason or another Hewlett Johnson's vocation turned out to be neither that of an engineer nor a missionary; instead he entered as his life-work the regular ministry of the Church of England.

APPROACH IS TWOFOLD

It is evident, however, that Dean Johnson's early combination of science and religion constitutes the ever-present background of his thought. And thus his approach to Soviet socialism is definitely twofold. In the first place, as a scientist he is appalled at the economic waste and scientific frustration decreed by capitalism; and he is correspondingly stirred by the unleashing of economic potentiality and the growing fulfillment of science in the broadest sense in the Soviet Union. In the second place, as a Christian he is outraged at capitalism's unethical denial of justice and freedom, human fellowship and an abundant life, to the vast majority of people; and at the same time he is deeply impressed by the increasingly successful efforts of Soviet socialism to establish precisely these values on the substantial and lasting foundations of a planned and democratic economic order.

> The Russian program [writes the Dean], gripped me from its earliest formulation. Majestic in range, practical in detail, scientific in form, Christian in spirit, it has embarked on a task never yet attempted by modern or ancient State. It is a program which thinks, not in terms of a privileged class, but in terms of each individual soul; not in terms of profit for the few, but in terms of service for all; deliberately bent on organizing the whole of life over a sixth of the earth's surface, so that a twelfth of the world's population may eventually share, each according to his need. The thing is stupendous, and as applied to the concrete situation of life wholly new. It had been a matter of dreams for idealists, never a basis of government for statesmen.

For Dean Johnson the key to the Soviet program and achievement consists in the overall socialist planning of the USSR. It is this planning, extending to and integrating every aspect of economic and social life—throughout a country larger than all of North America and facing the most complex problems of geography, climate, transportation, race and language—that offers such a striking contrast to the great big buzzing confusion and chaos characteristic of unplanned capitalist economy wherever and whenever it is found. *Socialist planning is science in action,* and on a scale scarcely dreamt of previously. In Soviet Russia, not only are the specific sciences in all fields given tremendous encouragement and granted unheard-of funds, but the social sciences as a whole, always lagging so far behind the physical under capitalism, have become enthroned at the very center of things and in the form of social-economic planning function concretely in the everyday existence of the people. This is a scientific advance, a scientific revolution if you like, simply unprecedented in the affairs of mankind.



The Very Reverend Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, was a civil engineer before he became a leader of the Anglican Church.

Hewlett Johnson pursues the drama of socialist planning into every nook and cranny of Soviet activity: from the opening up and rapid civilizing of the "friendly" Arctic to the vast irrigation and cotton-growing projects of the Uzbek and Kirghiz Republics in Central Asia; from the harnessing of the rivers to fulfill Lenin's original vision of an electrocentric economy to the discovery and utilization of the largest coal and iron deposits on the earth; from the careful and economical distribution of industry throughout all sections of the huge Soviet "continent" to the staggering results of that industry in raising the standard of living and in giving promise that within the next generation the Soviet Union will be as powerful industrially as all the rest of the world put together.

LIBERATION OF WOMEN

Turning from the prodigious material accomplishments of the USSR, the author gives a sweeping picture of the new cultural and spiritual horizons, the "new humanism" as he calls it, toward which the Soviet people are so swiftly driving. Here Dean Johnson is particularly successful, I think, in describing the vigorous spirit and infinite opportunities of youth in the Soviet Union, the racial democracy and sense of equality that pervades the entire country, and the immensely significant liberation of women that has taken place. I have done a lot of reading about Soviet Russia, but I have come across nothing more thrilling than the account in this book of how the embattled women of the Mohammedan East finally and permanently did away with the wearing of the *paranja* (veil). In general, Dean Johnson shows unmistakably that the great Christian ideals of communal welfare and human brotherhood have made such remarkable headway in the land of socialism because there the basic economic forces support and encourage these ideals instead of,

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as in all capitalist nations, conflicting with and counteracting them.

Dean Johnson completes his story with an epilogue of some twenty pages that constitutes one of the best summaries of Soviet foreign relations over the past decade and especially over the past year that can be found anywhere. The author demonstrates how the British governing class "were so blind and stupid as to prefer war to shaking hands with the Soviet" (a mistake that seems likely to be repeated in our own United States); and how the very thing that Tory leaders and statesmen wished so ardently to avoid, namely the collapse of European capitalism, "moves with the remorseless march of Greek tragedy to its inevitable climax." And when that climax arrives, the movement toward socialism, due to the existence and influence of the Soviet Union, will be far more powerful than in 1917 and 1918.

Hewlett Johnson has written one of the few *must* books of 1940. Even radicals, in the general excitement over foreign affairs and international wars, tend to forget that inside the vast Soviet domain socialism goes marching on. How far it has marched and whither it is marching Dean Johnson makes clear even to the casual reader. Amidst a world writhing in the hell of mass slaughter and screaming terror, a world of present disaster and defeat for everything that decent men hold dear, the citadel of international socialism stands firm and undismayed, a towering beacon of hope and light for the stricken peoples of the earth.

CORLISS LAMONT.

Rosten's Poetry

RETURN AGAIN TRAVELER, *by Norman Rosten. Yale Series of Younger Poets. Yale University Press. $2.00.*

THE candles they burned last summer at Breadloaf Writer's Conference were funeral tapers, I was told. The old fogies and young fogies there, who constitute the teaching staff, celebrated a jolly old wake over what they labeled the corpse of proletarian literature.

Such funerals have been held before; or rather, such symbolic murders, where pins are stuck into a puppet christened with the name of the desired victim. For a long time criticism at such confabulations and in the tory journals, and recently in the liberal journals as well, has resembled these obscene rites.

The pinsticker critics have long careers ahead of them—as pinstickers. Their victim is unkillable. The realities out of which proletarian literature draws its subjects are largely and heavily with us; and the understanding from which it takes its light and faith has become an ineradicable knowledge.

I was moved to these observations by reading Norman Rosten's *Return Again Traveler,* the current selection in the Yale Series of Younger Poets. This series has come to be the launching yard of new talents. A large proportion of its recent selections has gone

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to the "left." Even in this year of the war lords, 1940, it has gone to Norman Rosten, a young poet of the "left."

Return Again Traveler has a number of virtues. It is bold and vigorous and interesting. It contains no mysteries to puzzle out, no devices to throw the reader. This is no book with which an intellectual snob can closet himself, sweat out *recherche* meanings, and come forth glowing with the nasty satisfaction that he understands something that is a dead language to his fellow men. The pleasure the reader has in Rosten's book is, on the contrary, one that can be shared with the thousands. Perhaps it should be shouted from the rooftops, "Here is poetry that can be *enjoyed*."

Reading *Return Again Traveler* I thought of the two major movements in the last generation of American poetry. One was the attempt, by poets in the middle West where the transforming and creative elements of American life were more active than in the East, to have poetry deal with common life and be an expression of the people. These poets of the Middle West, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, Edgar Lee Masters, wrote almost the only poetry that a mass public in America has read and unselfconsciously enjoyed. The other movement came from the East, Amy Lowell and her immediate followers, or from American emigres to Europe, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, H. D., who wanted poetry to be the perception of the exquisite individual transmitted to an elite. They succeeded in turning poetry into a sort of solitary vice, deepening the psychopathic taint that had fallen upon it.

The influence of the latter group was strong upon young poets for many years. It is still faintly discernible in parts of *Return Again Traveler*. But, in the main, we have here a return to the older influence, chiefly it seems to me through the medium of Carl Sandburg's last and finest book of poetry, *The People, Yes*.

Rosten's theme, in *Return Again Traveler* is, we may say, the discovery and rediscovery of America. The first of the two parts of the volume deals with the voyage of Columbus, the settling of the new world, the building of the trans-continental railroads, and the rueful awakening to the realization that the lavish days of the exploitation of a new world are over. The second part is a ride over the America of today, by a man with bold eyes.

For this theme Rosten employs a verse form neither wholly regular nor irregular, but one which permits a sharp and rapid line; a vocabulary taken from American speech and spoken in a familiar, loud, and confident voice. Literary devices, on the whole, are sparingly used. Rhyme, for instance, appears only now and then, to help a chosen line linger on the ear.

Here and there one may find the Whitman catalog, the telescoping of advertising slogans, and other things that have become the modern poet's practice scales and which he would do well to omit from his published work. Here and there, too, the writing is not finished enough, and is at times too strident; there is a second shout while the ears are still ringing from the first.

But the important thing is that here is a vigorous and important young poet who returns to the healthier of the two sources of modern American poetry, who uses a modern speech not of the ultra, closet poets, but spoken by the plain people of America and dealing with the common life of the land; who, above all, writes interesting poetry.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Soil, Coal, and Oil

MY COUNTRY, 'TIS OF THEE, *by Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Eleanor Bowman, and Mary Phelps. Macmillan. $3.50.*

THREE clever women have given us a rare and tantalizing book about soil, coal, and oil. It is so well written that the conflict between waste and conservation lives against the background of American history and of geological development.

Although the plan of the book is ambitious, it is well carried out. And the facts, carefully assembled and comprehensive, are so stated that the most hardened rebel against statistics will find them interesting. As a social document, however, the book is good but unsatisfying. The writers have a genuine concern for human values. They are distressed about the poverty and injustice which they saw on their "grand tour." The reader is not allowed to forget the sufferings of the dust-bowl farmers, the Negro sharecroppers, the unemployed miners. We are reminded that "life on a wheat ranch is not so secure as it looks from a Ford window." The injustices of Jim Crow and the disfranchisement of all poor families in the poll-tax states do not escape the authors.

They contrast the lively efforts of the bootleg miners, carrying on dangerous work on company-owned land, with the dead apathy of workers in the northern section of the Pennsylvania anthracite area.

We found that newcomers to Wilkes-Barre felt oppressed by this atmosphere of fear which dominated professional as well as industrial groups and seemed like a shadow cast by the few great coal companies who controlled the community in a life-and-death fashion.

In the bootleg section, workers and shopkeepers, and even local bankers had worked out a complete justification for the workers who extract the coal without benefit of title.

The anthracite region is a one-industry region. The community thrives or dies with this industry. The land is not good for much else, nor for factories, except as cheap women workers are available (the wives and daughters of the miners). Therefore the community, for self-preservation, has a right to demand that the mines give their men a means of earning a livelihood either through employment by the legitimate owners, through government regulation or through bottlegging.

And the authors relate this idea to the principles of July 4, 1776.

Of special interest also is their picture of waste and monopoly in the oil industry.

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by
R. PALME DUTT

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One of the best of the many original graphic illustrations shows the competition in production of crude oil and in retailing of gasoline, with the bottleneck of monopoly in pipe lines and refining.

But with all their deep concern over injustice and poverty and monopoly, and over the terrific waste of our natural resources, these writers stop short of any adequate diagnosis. They dream of planning and regulation. They represent the best social thinking that can be expected of those who refuse to look beyond the capitalist system. With all their cleverness they do not see what really lies behind and below the facts they so skillfully present. The underlying nature of the problems they recognize escapes them. They look to the government as actually representing the human interests of the nation as a whole.

Impressive and valuable as the book is, this reviewer kept reverting to another recent book also written about our country before the superficial progressivism of President Roosevelt's middle years in the White House had been cast aside for war preparations. Anna Louise Strong in *My Native Land* saw, as Mrs. Mitchell and her associates did not see, the ways in which control of our government has passed from the hands of the millions of voters to serve as a tool for the very groups which these high-minded and warm-hearted women would like to have the government regulate.

Miss Strong, who also toured the country, studied the operations of New Deal agencies helping the farmers and the unemployed. She found them usually trying to do their best, but the very vastness and complexity of government activities raised further questions in her mind:

> Who, then, commands this mighty mechanism of government on which our lives increasingly depend? This becomes for each of us a burning problem, more than it was in Jefferson's or Jackson's day.

Miss Strong found an answer which clicks with the experience of many others who have come closer to the problems of poverty and hunger:

> But one could see . . . that one class of people was accustomed in daily life to command this mechanism of government, while another class was accustomed to obey. . . . The farther one goes down the economic scale, it seems, the more the people are compelled to submit to government; the farther up the scale, the more they command.

As I finished reading *My Country, 'Tis of Thee,* I could not forget the points raised by Miss Strong. And I wonder who will carry through the planning and the regulating which this book shows clearly are indispensable if our resources are to be preserved and the masses are to have even a minimum of security, health, and education. Shall it be a government controlled by the small moneyed class and primarily safeguarding its profits? Or can we achieve a truly democratic government, controlled *by* the people and operating for their interests? ANNA ROCHESTER.

Books in Brief

NEITHER LIBERTY NOR BREAD: THE MEANING AND TRAGEDY OF FASCISM, *edited by Frances Keene. Harper. $3.50.*

You pick up a book of this kind, with a question in your mind: will the book help build the kind of understanding of fascism which will contribute to its overthrow? Or is its publication merely calculated to exploit the anti-fascist sentiments of Americans in the interest of Anglo-American imperialism?

The answer in this case is that the volume contributes less than little to the understanding of fascism. The forty-two exiles whose writings are represented heap odium upon Mussolini and imprecations upon fascism but they do nothing to describe or to prove that they know the essential core of the system. You will never guess from this book that fascism is an instrument of capitalist power, created by the monopolists to maintain their absolute domination over the people of a given country when, under specific historical conditions, that power is threatened.

Naturally there is no possible room in such a book for the specific facts as to the growth of fascism in Italy under the influence of increasing subsidies from the owning classes; no room for the facts pertaining to encouragement of Italian fascism by the ruling classes of *other* countries. Nor is there space among many chapters of discussion of international affairs—including three chapters on the Spanish War—for an outline of the unique role of the Soviet Union in pointing out a road that leads away from fascism, in checking the spread of fascist influence.

THE DOCTOR AND HIS PATIENTS, *by Arthur E. Hertzler. Harper Bros. $2.75.*

Dr. Hertzler offers his observations on the problems of everyday life as he sees it from his consultation room. He stresses the number of cases where the physical complaint is due to some fundamental psychological wound inflicted by society; the mother who knows her son has been killed in a stupid, unnecessary war and the child who suffers from lack of parental care. Hertzler sees all these things, but the remedies he offers are a compound of bromides and irrelevancies.

100 NON-ROYALTY ONE-ACT PLAYS, *compiled by William Kozlenko. Greenberg. $3.75.*

The energetic Mr. Kozlenko, who gave us the excellent anthology, *Best Short Plays of the Social Theater,* has done an enormous and valuable scissors-and-paste job with the present volume, designed to give schools, summer camps, churches, colleges, clubs, little theaters, and amateur drama tournaments a mass of material on which they will not have to pay royalties for performance rights. You will not find a famous name among the list of contributors (if you except Bernard Sobel), but most of these plays will stand the test of amateur performance, and they are of every variety of subject matter and mood.

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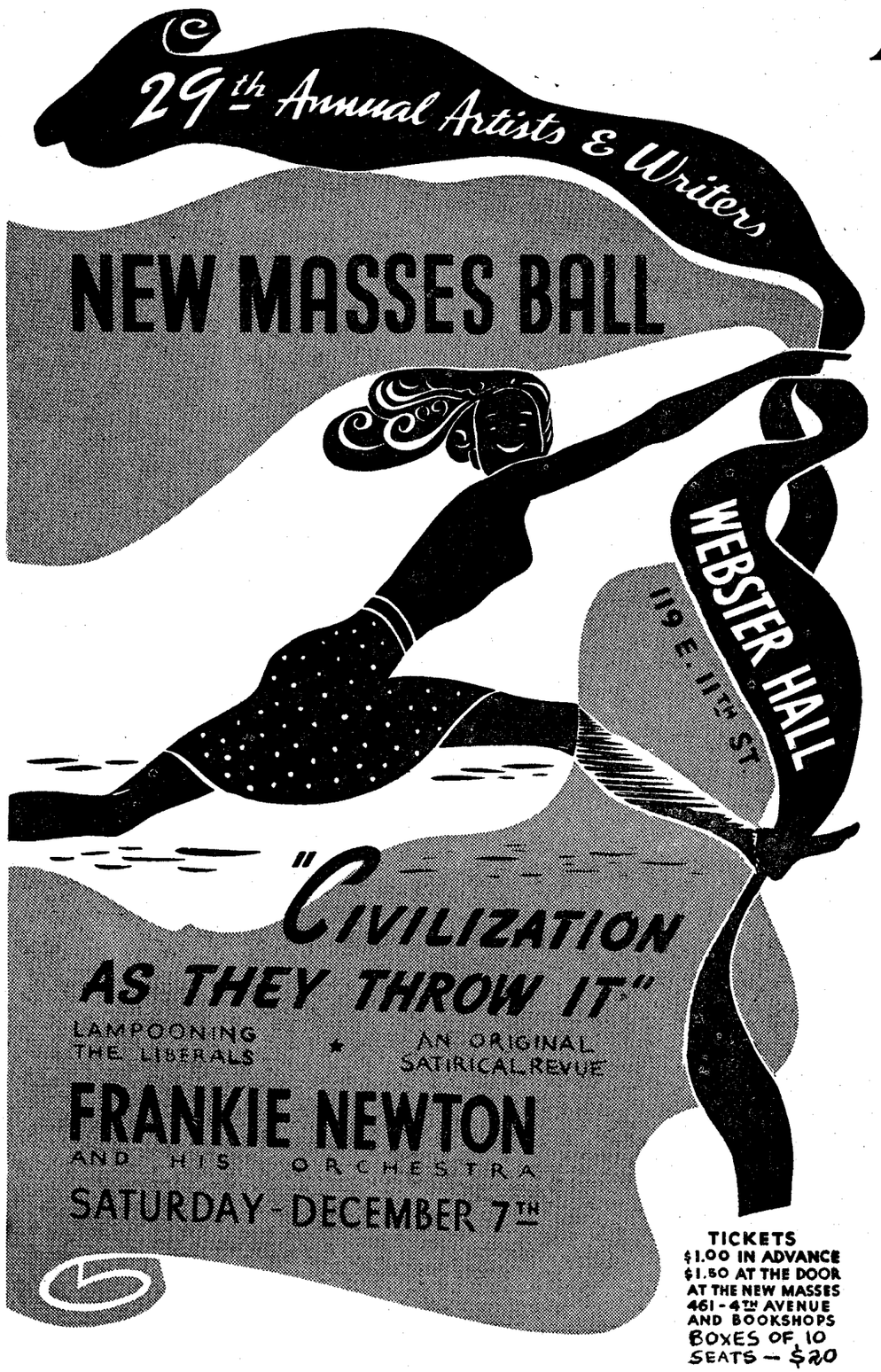

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"The Great Beginning"

This new Soviet movie tells the story of a peasant woman's rise to the presidency of a collective farm. A first-rate film on women under socialism.

LAST week the Miami Theater began a showing of *The Great Beginning,* first of a new group of Soviet pictures to reach America by way of Petsamo, and other exhibitors in the Times Square area are looking on ruefully at the Miami's business.

The Great Beginning concerns the transformation of a Russian housewife from the surly, ignorant, put-upon wife of a poor peasant to the president of her collective farm, and delegate to the Supreme Soviet. Before collectivization came to the farms in 1930, she was regularly pushed around by her husband, who, in turn, was pushed around by the rich farmers in the neighborhood. When the collective farm was formed and her courage and native good sense brought her honors, her husband was so annoyed and piqued that he divorced her. But socialism has a way of destroying prejudices. By the time of the good harvest of 1932 they were together again, and he was in charge of the collective dairy. The collective farm not only had to struggle against stubborn old men who used their reluctance to take orders from a woman as an excuse for not working, but also against bureaucrats who had never persuaded themselves that collective farming was a good idea. There was a bumbling old agriculturist who gave the president bad advice, but she had to put up with him till she trained a new one. He finally tried to kill her, but like everything else he did, he bungled it.

Vera Maretskaya, who holds that wonderful title Honored Artist of the Republic, plays the president with respect and understanding, making her a symbol of what is possible for women under socialism. I hope that this was the first movie the women of Bielo-Russia, Bessarabia, and the Baltic Republics saw when they became citizens of the Soviet Union.

The directors of *The Great Beginning,* Alexander Zarkhi and Joseph Heifetz, are still at the age where they would be known in America as boy wonders. I have read somewhere that they went to work at the Lenfilm studios in Leningrad in 1930, when they were just out of their teens, and after studying all aspects of the business, in 1937 they made *Baltic Deputy.* Then they worked a year and a half on *The Great Beginning,* rehearsing scenes a month if necessary, and not releasing the picture till they felt it was perfect. To the run-of-the-mine Hollywood director, who starts on a script five days after he gets it, who shoots a picture in eighteen days and isn't allowed to cut it, this would be like going on location in heaven. There are many Hollywood directors who would like to get a chance at the kind of subject matter in *The Great Beginning* without having to think of their studio's Bank of America loan. They realize that pictures which approach a serious subject as seriously as *The Great Beginning* are better than the slickest, most skillful screen version of any play by Somerset Maugham. *The Great Beginning* is my idea of a first-rate picture but it is somewhat deficient technically. In most scenes the camera seems to be rooted to the ground, there is never any lighting to speak of, and occasionally the cutting is awkward. Its arrangement into self-contained episodes gives the actors the impossible job of developing by jerks. Vera Maretskaya manages to do it, but for the others, who have less time on the screen, it isn't possible. Consequently, several sequences are somewhat abrupt. In *Baltic Deputy,* one of the best pictures I ever saw, these abrupt sequences had a mounting effect to which the old professor's final speech to the soldiers of the new Red Army came as a tremendous climax. In *The Great Beginning* the peasant woman delivers a final speech before the Supreme Soviet, but too much has happened since the picture started and the speech is mechanical.

Stalin has said that Russia has many things to learn from America, and this is as true of movies as it is of mining. Soviet directors are perfectly well aware of their faults. Hollywood distributors send a print of important Hollywood pictures to Moscow in an attempt to get them into the Russian market—the Russians bought half a dozen American pictures a year before the war—and the prints come back badly frayed, indicating that Russian technicians have run them off frequently to see what they could learn. Larger sums are being appropriated in the Soviet budget every year for movies, and the movie industry is now building bigger studios, better sound equipment, and those subtle machines which enable cameras to swoop around practically at will. Considering the fact that Soviet directors like Zarkhi and Heifetz are able to deal with subjects of sginificance and take their time about it, these things are not important, except as they make Soviet pictures easier on the eyes. It would be good for the movies if Soviet pictures became frayed by being run off in Hollywood. After watching *The Great Beginning* for a few minutes, you pay no attention to the bad lighting, which does not interfere with the story of a great popular movement and the effect of its flowering on the life of a woman. Even for people who know nothing of the Soviet Union, it is moving. It achieves a result which Hollywood, with its skilled craftsmen and great resources, can achieve maybe once or twice every year.

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. *A print by Raphael Soyer exhibited at the WPA Teachers Union, Local 453, AFL, 28 W. 31st St., New York City, with other prints, oil paintings, water colors, and lithographs. The entire collection will be auctioned off for the benefit of suspended WPA workers at Lotte Jacobi's Studios, 157 W. 54th Street, Friday evening, December 13.*

It happens that Hollywood has just released a screen version of a Somerset Maugham play. New York critics almost fainted in the presence of *The Letter,* a Warner Brothers picture starring Bette Davis, and most of them didn't review *The Great Beginning* at all, particularly if they worked for the papers whose policy is to treat the Soviet Union as though it isn't there. *The Letter,* as far as directing, acting, and camera work go, is a masterpiece. Zarkhi and Heifetz could learn a lot from it, and probably will. I am not among those who have stood in line for Bette Davis' autograph, feeling that her acting is based on a few more or less obvious tricks and a terrific build-up. But William Wyler, director of *The Letter,* has not permitted her to be as nervously desperate as usual and has kept her eyes from popping right out of her head. The story is as familiar as any piece of hack work can become after being performed at intervals for twenty years. The repressed British wife of a rubber planter outside Singapore kills an Englishman not her husband, and is so successful in telling people that she was pro-

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tecting her honor that a British jury acquits her. The jury does not know of a letter she wrote the murdered man on the day of his death, asking him to come to see her. It turns out that she had loved him for years, reproaching herself all the time, and killed him when he threw her over and married a native. Now Somerset Maugham could no more marry a native than he could fly, and *The Letter* succeeds in imparting some of the cold disgust he feels when he thinks of anybody who is not a member of his set. Among the natives in *The Letter* are subservient houseboys, a calculating, mercenary lawyer's clerk, an opium-smoking, giggling blackmailer, and of course the dead man's wife, a cold, murderous enigmatic Oriental who glides around in the person of Gale Sondergaard. The British characters are different. They have such a capacity for understatement that it is sometimes hard to make out what is going on, and their small talk is delivered from beneath a stiff upper lip. An effort is made, which fails, to make them seem like noble human specimens.

The people who made *The Letter* were so competent, so skilled in their profession that it actually matters to the audience what becomes of Bette Davis in the end. The only fault I could find with this picture technically was that when Bette Davis told the true story of her love for the murdered man, it was no more believable than when she told the cock-and-bull story of how she had saved her honor. That was not the fault of the director. All his talent, all his success in creating pace and atmosphere, all the technical perfection of the settings, are wasted on a trite, trivial story about possibly the world's dullest group of people. The cheap chauvinism of *The Letter's* attitude towards the Chinese and Malayan people must be added to its chauvinism towards even British women. Bette Davis' husband was so good and kind that he forgave her before she was stabbed to death. It would seem from *The Great Beginning,* on the other hand, that in the Soviet Union women are considered people.

"SEVEN SINNERS"

It seems that John Wayne is a lieutenant in the US Navy and Marlene Dietrich is a cafe singer of a particularly low type in the Dutch East Indies, where the oil comes from. They are thrown together and they are about to be married according to the requirements of the Hays office, when the cafe proprietor informs the lieutenant that the cafe singer, known as Bijou, comes of a socially prominent family in the states, and there is something about singing in a cafe that gets into a person's heart and blood. Bijou would hate him if he made her give it up to become part of that narrow, mean-spirited coterie of navy wives who follow the fleet all over the world playing bridge. Would he be accepted socially by her friends, just because he was tall and broad-shouldered and had all the girls nuts about him? Marriages like that just don't work out. She would want to kill him in six months. So, not to endanger her career in the East Indies cafes, he quietly leaves for maneuvers without saying goodby. Maybe *Seven Sinners* got me a little mixed up.

DANIEL TODD.

"The Corn Is Green"

Alvah Bessie reviews Emlyn Williams' new play.

AFTER weeks of being a sourpuss (willy-nilly), it is a distinct pleasure to recommend, without any serious reservations, Emlyn Williams' new play, *The Corn Is Green* (at the National). Do not expect great dramaturgy, nor any considerable profundity, but expect (and you will enjoy) a thoroughly honest and moving play by the author of the brilliant psychological thriller, *Night Must Fall.* Mr. Williams has written an autobiographical drama about a young Welsh miner in whom a British teacher interested herself, back in the eighteen-nineties. Miss Moffat, the teacher, burned with a pure flame of honest pedagogical zeal. She really believed that the words to educate mean to lead, to draw out. She led and she drew out the illiterate young boy who, in common with others of his class, had entered the pits at twelve, until he stood, successfully, for a scholarship at Oxford, the university of the British ruling class.

You would not believe, from this brief synopsis, that Mr. Williams had very much to say. For basically it is not terribly important (dramatically) whether a young man gets a scholarship to the seat of British snobbery or not. But because he has drawn his characters with such true perspicacity and understanding; because he has infused into his play such real emotion, and because, I believe, his drama is so truly progressive, he has achieved an evening in the theater that is thoroughly rewarding.

Miss Moffat's experiment in educating the young slaves of the Welsh mines, is opposed, naturally enough, by the local squire. It meets the opposition, at first, of the boys themselves, who are real proletarians and are made the butt of their comrades' jokes. Who wants to learn all those fine words? How will they help to earn your bread, or put any butter on it? Miss Moffat is at the point of abandoning the project when she discovers Morgan Evans, who becomes her guinea pig. The Evans boy has taught himself to read and write . . . why? Because (with a gesture at the bookshelves in the living room) he wanted to find out what was "behind all that." He finds out.

His education is almost stymied by a local tart who gets a baby by him. (This situation is the only contrived aspect of the play.) But Miss Moffat extricates him from a catastrophe that might have prevented him from realizing the dream he had first expressed in instinctive poetry—"if a light come in the mine. . . ." He, she points out, will *be* that light. He will save, and in his turn educate

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GOINGS ON

SELLING AMERICA A NEW WAR: FROM GEORGE CREEL TO ARCHIBALD MACLEISH. Lecture by **SENDER GARLIN**, Daily Worker Columnist, **SATURDAY, December 7, 2:30 P.M. WORKERS SCHOOL**, 50 East 13 Street, second floor. Admission 25 cents.

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF NEWS OF THE WEEK. SUNDAY NIGHT, December 8, 8:30 P.M. WORKERS SCHOOL, 50 East 13 Street, second floor. Admission 25 cents. **INCREASED SEATING FACILITIES.**

WHO KILLED POETRY? A lively Wake and Resurrection led by Norman Corwin, Jacques Roumain, Isidor Schneider, David Wolff, Eda Lou Walton, Joy Davidman, Edwin Seaver, **FRIDAY, December 13, 8:30 P.M.** Newspaper Guild Club, 117 West 46 Street. Adm. 35c. Auspices: **LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WRITERS.**

The **ASSOCIATED SCHOOLS** announces its **GRAND OPENING** in Harlem on **SAT. EVE., Dec. 14, 9 P.M.** at 303 West 125 St., Guests of honor—Katherine Dunham, Kamaladevi, Wm. C. Handy. Alison Burroughs, director, invites you. Subs. 50 cents.

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his people, the people with whom he never loses his identity throughout the drama. He and his people can triumph over such relics of the past as are represented by the feudal lord of the manor, the squire, and make England a place in which people can live again.

Mr. Williams has not written an impassioned play, but it is an honest one. His criticism of the British educational system is bitter and pointed. And in presenting his ideas, he had the good fortune to have the gifts of several talented people at his command. Herman Shumlin had directed with a fine understanding of the underlying problems. Ethel Barrymore rises, at moments, to a real projection of her role as Miss Moffat. Largely she is content, as always, to sweep the stage with her magnificent presence, and leave acting to the minor characters; but there are moments when she gets inside her role. As Morgan Evans, Richard Waring is tender, truculent, and convincing. High praise should go, too, to Rosalind Ivan as a reformed tart; but when you see *The Corn Is Green,* please pay particular attention to the performance of Miss Thelma Schnee, who plays her daughter. This is a young lady who may, quite possibly, develop into a great actress. Her development, in the drama, from a long-legged petulant brat, into a rural prostitute, is a beautiful thing to behold. At this moment in her career, she has genius; she must fight to retain it, develop it.

"FLEDGLING"

Not very much that is pleasant can be said for the play which Eleanor Carroll Chilton and Philip Lewis have contrived from the former's novel, *Follow the Furies,* and now titled *Fledgling* (at the Hudson). You may respect it, for it is an honest, if inept piece of work. A problem play that poses and leaves unresolved two problems—the conflict between atheism and religion, and the business of mercy killing—its conflicts find no roots in its characters and its situations seem unmotivated throughout. A routine production by uninspired players such as Sylvia Weld, Ralph Morgan, and Tom Powers, fails to lift it above mere earnestness. One bit player does a nice job—Margaret Clifford as a private nurse, the type that speaks of her patient as "we"—"Now we must go beddie-bye." She was excellent.

CHEAP AT TWICE THE PRICE

You will not find an evening's entertainment in New York better than the intimate progressive musical revues the American Youth Theater is offering these Saturday nights for 59 cents a ticket.

These are the kids who formerly were known as the Flatbush Art Theater, and under the direction of Lou Cooper have, in the past year or so, built up an audience of over ten thousand people hungry for theatrical entertainment. They work by day (trade-union boys and gals) and rehearse at night, and the quality of their material, both written and human, is thoroughly professional.

Last week I saw one such bill of goods called *You Asked for It.* We surely did, and *do.* Much of this material (sketches by Sam Locke, Lou Cooper, and others) is in process of being tested out, and will be repeated in the future. The theater has a corps of energetic young men and women who are amateurs only in the sense that they make no money from their donning of the buskin. Watch Bernie Wesstler, the M.C.; watch particularly Buddy Yarus, his assistant, and try to keep your eyes off Betty Garrett who is comedienne, swing-songstress, and all-around personality girl. Emile Renan of the American Ballad Singers (originally developed by this group and their proudest achievement so far) sings with them frequently. A dance team called the Three Merry Maids combines amusing ballet satire with brilliant interpretive work on the hoof. Jane Hoffman is a new comedienne and Bob Sharron delivers verse and song with incisive virility and punch.

Go to the Fraternal Clubhouse (110 West 48th Street) this Saturday evening (December 14). This time it will be called *A Peace of Our Mind,* and there is dancing thrown in for good measure. Take all your friends, and kick me if you don't have a whale of a time.

ALVAH BESSIE.

Art Notes

Comments on several current exhibitions and color television.

TO CELEBRATE the chaos of Art Week, Columbia Broadcasting System color-televised six paintings in a New York City demonstration. Work by Henry Billings, John Steuart Curry, John Ferron, Ernest Fiene, Roy V. Hughes, and Alphonso T. Toran was transmitted to a small audience of critics and artists. When technics of television and color photography are finally perfected, art will have a channel of reaching the millions undreamed-of in these gallery-and-museum-bound days.

Till Jan. 8, 1941, the Whitney Museum of American Art is holding its annual exhibition of contemporary American art: 164 oils by as many painters, forty-one of them included for the first time. For the first time, also, a new policy of selection is in force; previously work shown has represented the artist's choice; this year the museum has had a vote, too. The level may be taken then as that of the museum's taste. Generally the taste is, if not conservative, safe. A kind of grayness pervades the whole, and there is a tendency among the painters shown to exaggerate subject matter for its sensational and novelty value, rather than for its inherent meaning. This exhibition has been described as the season's most important show of contemporary American painting. A critical opinion which does not choose to play safe prefers to give this honor to the United American Artists exhibition at the World's Fair, which

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showed far healthier and livelier trends.

The Museum of Modern Art is holding its annual exhibition of "Useful Objects Under $10." These are objects of daily use. Lamps, tableware, plastic hairbrushes, kitchen utensils, clocks, etc., all products of contemporary industrial design and mass-production industry. For the first time, only American products are shown. In this field of art there is that organic connection between artist's product and consumer which has so often been lost in the fine arts field. Machine art and technology stand fully justified in the result.

At the same time, the Museum of Modern Art is exhibiting seventy-seven color prints, all except a dozen of them made by the silk screen method which has come into wide use for fine arts within the past two years. Ranging in price from $3 to $10, these prints embody a useful conception of art—popular graphic art. Subject matter is developed with an understanding of the needs and interests of a mass audience; it is used as a means of enrichment of experience for hard-working people whose lives are crowded with activity and anxiety. The museum does popular art a service by holding this exhibition.

E. N.

New Records

Reviews of recent releases. Numbers from "Lights Up."

Two excellent releases were provided last month by the Victor Black Label series. "Brahms Variations on a Theme by Haydn" (G 16, $2.50) and "Dances and March" from Borodine's *Prince Igor* (G 14, $2.50) are valuable additions to your record library. The Brahms variations are played by the London Symphony Orchestra with Pablo Casals, the world-famous cellist, directing. Difficult as it is to match the Toscanini reading of the same composition (Victor), Casals has plenty to say on his own. His interpretation is clear cut and the outlines and development of these masterful variations are plainly delineated.

The selections from *Prince Igor,* overlong and repetitions in sections, are still among the best examples of genuine Russian music. The London Philharmonic is the orchestra and Eugene Goosens wields the baton. Both Victor releases are recommended.

For those who still like Ravel's *Bolero* Columbia has provided a Roman holiday, (X-174, $2.00). Leopold Stokowski and the American Youth Orchestra take the opportunity to "go to town" and they paint it every color. I have always regarded Stokowski as the best tonal painter of our day, and in this set he demonstrates once more that he can still see and extract more color blends from a composition than anybody else. His proteges, the splendid American Youth Orchestra, respond to his every wish. The result is a recording of exceptional power and impact.

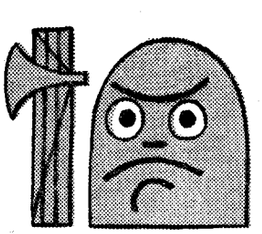
Before Stravinsky embraced neo-classicism he was a composer of immense stature. Hearing the Columbia *"Le Sacre du Printemps"* (M-417, $4.50) serves to reemphasize this fact. The music generates such energy that it can only leave the listener breathless. The exciting rhythms, the challenging harmonies, the startling originality of the style explain not only why a whole generation of composers was influenced by Stravinsky, but also why this music enjoys a continually expanding audience. The NY Philharmonic performs with the composer conducting. Don't miss this one!

Last spring that superb violinist, Joseph Szigeti, brought a Carnegie Hall audience to its feet after his playing of the *Bach Concerto in D Minor.* This concerto has been correctly described as the greatest and most difficult violin concerto before Beethoven. Columbia has made an excellent recording of it (M-418, $3.50). Szigeti, accompanied by members of the New Friends of Music orchestra led by Fritz Steidry, achieves a brilliant artistic level. Four stars!

Last June the Unity Theater of London decided to produce a musical revue called *Lights Up.* Its lilting tunes and satiric sketches became very popular with the British people. Four hit numbers were recorded by the Unity Theater, performed by a top notch dance orchestra, chorus and stars of the revue. These records enjoyed wide distribution until things were made uncomfortable for the pressing companies. It soon became impossible to find anyone who would press the records. In New York the Music Room came to the rescue by reproducing and distributing the records to American audiences. The numbers: "Brother, Brother, Use Your Head," "The Man Who Waters the Workers' Beer," "Black Blackout," "Here We Come" are written in the conventional musical comedy mode; but they contain warmth, confidence, contagious enthusiasm, and at least in the case of "Black Blackout" are among the cleverest examples of songs with social significance to come out of England or America.

Brahms' symphonies and concertos are part of the repertoire of every orchestra in the world. But it is often in his smallest works that Brahms excels. Among my favorite records is the collection of "Brahms Waltzes" arranged for symphony orchestra (Victor, 36325—75c). There is such a consistent level of excellence in these many little gems that one never tires of them. Practically all of Brahms' striking rhythmic and harmonic effects are contained within their reduced area. Certainly they are far superior to either the Chopin or the Strauss Waltzes.

LOU COOPER.



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